CHRIST

DISPLAYED,

AS THE

Choiceſt Gift, and Beſt Maſter:

From { *Joh.* 4. 10.
Joh. 13. 13.

Being ſome of the laſt Sermons Preached by that faithful and induſtrious Servant of Jeſus Chriſt,

Mr. *NATHANEEL HEYWOOD*,

Sometime Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Ormeſchurch* in *Lancaſhire*.

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1 Cor. 2. 2, *For I determined not to know any thing among you, ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.*

Salvian de Gubern. Dei, Lib. 4.

In id penitus deducta res eſt, ut ſicut de Paganis Barbaris priùs diximus, Chriſti nomen non videatur jam Sacramentum eſſe ſed ſermo. Nam in tantum apud plurimos nomen hoc parvi penditur, ut nunquam minus cogitent quippiam facere, quam cum ſe jurant per Chriſtum eſſe facturos.

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1679
H622

To the Worſhipful

HENRY HOGHTON, Eſq;

And the

Lady *STANLEY*, His Vertuous Conſort.

Worthy { *SIR*, / *MADAM*,

I Preſume to affix your Venerable Names in the Frontiſpiece of this Treatiſe, not upon my own account, or upon any ſuch intereſt I can challenge in your Worſhips, being much unknown to you; but as acting the part of the deceaſed Author, who had upon great reaſon conceived a very high eſtimation of you, as I doubt not but your reſpects to him were reciprocal, being grounded both upon long acquaintance and experience of each other, his diſcourſe of you with grateful acknowledg-

ments of your multiplied kindneſs to his perſon and family in my hearing, and his affectionate prayers for you, were clear teſtimonies that you were engraven upon his heart; and if his unparallel'd modeſty had permitted him to have committed any thing to the Preſs, doubtleſs his cordial affection would have iſſued it ſelf in ſuch an Epiſtolary inſcription. But ſince I am neceſſitated to ſupply his place in handing theſe Diſcourſes to the World, I proſtrate this expoſed Orphan at your feet, and queſtion not your candid reception, and reſolute protection of what was the genuine product of his mind and mouth, which I will confidently aſſure you theſe Treatiſes are, both for matter, method, words, without the leaſt addition, ſubſtraction, or alteration, being taken out of his own notes as he preacht them, writ at large with his own hand.

The matter of theſe Sermons is of greateſt moment and importance; fundamental truths they are [of the gift of God in our bleſſed Redeemer, and Chriſts Lordſhip and Soveraignty] which are truths

truths of the firſt magnitude, moſt neceſſary, like wool and corn, the ſtaple-commodities of this Kingdom; like bread and ſalt that muſt be ſet upon the Table; like ground-Cells upon which lyes the weight of the fabrick; theſe are comprehenſive and extenſive truths; without this gift ſinners had not been pardoned, accepted; without this Lordſhip ſouls would wander and rebel; the former brings us into favour with God, the latter conquers rebellious wills, ſubdues enemies, regulates Saints, and crowns them with glory. The manner of handling theſe ſubjects is plain, exact, nervous, and very pathetical, which took great impreſſion on the hearers vvhen firſt delivered with the lively voice of that fair ſpokeſman for Chriſt, whoſe heart was much taken with his lovely and beloved Lord, and took great delight to recommend him to poor ſinners. which he did with great advantage and ſucceſs, whereby he became a ſpiritual father of many children, whom he begot in the bonds of the Goſpel. Indeed he excelled others

in other ſubjects, but in this he excelled himſelf, eſpecially in this ſwan-like ſong, which ſavours of Heaven, and ſeems to be calculated for the height of *Sion*, to be ſung by that heavenly hoſt in the praiſes of our dear Redeemer.

But neither do theſe weighty ſubjects, nor the lively colours wherein they are ſet off, need my recommendation; nor yet the Authors gifts, graces, induſtry, fidelity, and other imitable properties, well known to you and all that were acquainted with him, need at all be mentioned by me, at leaſt at this ſeaſon, his ſingular accompliſhments and converſation ſhine too bright to be darkened by any black-mouth'd *Momus*; as his ſoul and body are beyond the reach of Satan and Sorrow, ſo his name is above any juſt cenſures and calumnies.

I make bold to put theſe *Poſthumous* works into your hands; may your Worſhips in the firſt place reap the benefit, and by your experiments thereof in your ſouls, and conformity thereto in your lives, incourage others to come and ſee how

how good our Lord Jeſus is; this is a lovely Song of one that could play well on an inſtrument; may your hearts eccho to this Goſpel-tune; here's ſolid food well cookt, rendred delectable with the ſweet ſauce of acceptable words; may your ſtomacks be keen and ſharp, and nouriſht by it to eternal life. Theſe are goads and nails faſtened by this maſter of aſſemblies (now rewarded by his Maſter) given out by one ſhepherd; may Gods Spirit faſten them as a nail in a ſure place upon many conſciences; I have then attained my ends in this undertaking; may God be thereby glorified, and ſouls edified, we have enough. The Lord bleſs you both, and make you rich bleſſings to your Country in your publick, domeſtical and perſonal ſtation and relation. The Lord drop down this choice gift into your laps and hearts, that you may give up your ſelves to him again as his bored, devoted ſervants for ever. God Almighty, that hath been the ſtay of your Youth, be alſo the ſtaff of your old age, and maintain you as choice inſtru-

ſtruments of his glory in the land of the living, and in a good old age conduct you through the valley of the ſhadow of death, into the land of life; ſo prayeth

Your Worſhips humble

Febr. 1. 167$\frac{3}{4}$. *Servant in our*

Deareſt Lord,

O. H.

To the CHRISTIAN READER, especially the Inhabitants of the Town and Parish of *Ormschurch*, and the places adjacent, Grace, Mercy, and Peace.

My dearly beloved in our dearest Lord,

IT *is an astonishing Providence that in such a day of Epidemical sinning, general fears of approaching Judgments, and great necessity in most places, God should thus weaken our strength, undermine the fabrick, by cutting off so many faithful Shepherds in so short a space, therein seeming as if he would make a way to his wrath. But as your dark parts have more need of such faithful Watchmen; so you are most emptied, God having of late renewed his witnesses against you, and broken you with breach upon breach; before your eyes were fully wiped for one loss, another follows at the heels, like* Job's *messengers, bringing the sad tidings of the death of another gracious Minister, and this last is not the least, under which you lye bleeding. It is true, on his account that's gone, you have no reason to lament, God hath put a blessed end to his torturing pains of body, perplexing thoughts of heart, and indefatigable labours in the Ministry, and crown'd him with glory; the sharper was his passage, the sweeter is his*

his preſent repoſe; he finds himſelf abundantly rewarded. God made great uſe of him here, and hath now taken him home to himſelf. His afflictions, temptations, oppoſitions, were above the ordinary rate, which as they aſſimilated him to his Maſter, ſo they promoted his greater uſefulneſs here, and fittedneſs for heaven; the lintel-ſtones and pillars of the new Jeruſalem, ſuffer more knocks of Gods hammer and tool, than the cómmon ſide-wall ſtones; God wearied him out of this world, and made heaven welcome; wiſh him not here again, but labour to improve this dreadful breach, by remembring his Doctrine, imitating his exemplary practice; and underſtanding Gods deſign in this ſo amazing ſtroke, ſearch out that Achan *that hath troubled your camp; lay to heart ſin, reform your lives, live up to the Doctrines you have been taught; and do theſe in particular which are here preſented to your view, and I am confident will be acceptable to you, though wanting the warming-accent of his lively voice, which was full of ſparkling ſpirits; you muſt ſee his face, hear his voice no more in your ſolemn aſſemblies; but yet this* Elijah *as he mounted up to heaven in a chariot of fire, dropped down this paper-mantle amongſt us, which by the ſpirit of grace concurring, may divide the ſwelling-waves of* Jordan; *I mean, ſeparate betwixt precious ſouls and thoſe abominations which at this day overflow all banks and bounds. Oh that Gods Spirit may by theſe conduits convey ſpiritual life and marrow into your ſouls, that you may live, though Miniſters die; they die civilly, naturally,*

may

may you live spiritually, eternally. This servant of God spent himself as a candle to give you light; if ever it might be said of a mortal man, as of our Saviour, The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up, *it may be said so of this choice servant of God, who spent and was spent for souls; who counted not his life dear unto him, that he might finish his course with joy; in labours more abundant. But I purposely wave what concerns his person at present, leaving a rough draught of his smooth life to a fitter season.*

All I shall add is, to give a brief account of these ensuing Treatises: As to the printing of them, though Solomon *caution his Son against making and reading many Books,* Eccles. 12. 12. *yet that only sounds a retreat to luxuriant wits in a scribling age, as to writing upon some subjects, or for vain glory, but doth not simply condemn writing Books, which hath been the key of discipline, an Herauld of the Gospel, and a notable mean to propagate true Religion. As for these discourses upon common subjects, I pickt them out of a vast bundle of variety of excellent discourses, upon such accounts as these.*

1. *Because I do not remember any such full Treatises upon these heads.*

2. *Yet they are needful and useful, pleasant and profitable.*

3. *They are handed out in a taking-method and manner.*

4. *His heart was much carried out in preaching Christ to sinners, he professed most delight in*

it;

it; these Sermons then are the lively idea *of his Gospel spirit.*

5. *God made them savoury and delectable in their first verbal delivery, and why not upon a second review?*

6. *This servant of God is likely to preach no more, but hereby being dead he yet speaketh*

7. *The importunity of such friends as deserved to be gratified, extorted this labour of love to the souls of sinners; nor shall it repent us to expose it naked to the worlds censures, so it may by Gods blessing profit any.*

For Treatises themselves, though carried on by way of similitude and resemblance, yet are not therefore to be despised or rejected; the Prophets used similitudes, Christ preacht much in Parables, and this way sweetly instills Truths with delight and clearness into the mind and affection; so that Cyprian's *caution be well regarded, that they be not stretcht too far: He instanceth in leaven; I may instance in this gift of God: Jesus Christ is not so a gift, but that he is also a Lord, not to be ruled by us, but to rule us:* To us a Son is given, *Isa.* 9. 6. *but how?* that yet the government might be upon his shoulder. *As he is the Lords Christ, so he is Christ the Lord, who will rule where he rests, and reign where ever he is received; he will be Lord as well as Life; a Master as well as a Treasure; he will sway his righteous scepter over us, as well as vouchsafe his glori-*

Lumen supernum nunquam defendit sine indumento.-- Rab. Cup. in Synt. Apost. p. 177, 178.

ous

ous benefits to us; he expects we ſhould be his ſervants as well as his friends; we muſt be the Lords Nethinims, *given to God; yea by our ſelves, as we expect this bleſſed Donative from God; he that will not be ruled by his golden ſcepter, ſhall be cruſhed by his iron rod. And as Jeſus Chriſt is a gift, ſo he is food, bread of life, heavenly manna; yet this muſt not be ſtretcht too far; for in this he is contrary to ordinary corporal food, for though he feed ſouls, he turns them (not they him) into his holy, heavenly nature. Chriſt as the gift of God is the matter of this feaſt; Chriſt as Lord is the maſter and maker of this feaſt. All this muſt be underſtood ſuitable to the majeſty of the Son of God, and according to the nature of Metaphors; otherwiſe ſaith* Cyprian, If they were the ſame, they were not examples, but the things rather which they illuſtrate. *But all theſe ſimilitudes fall infinitely ſhort of the perfection of him who is above finite excellencies,* [Nec ſimilitudinem ſubſtantiæ in facturis ſuis habere poteſt ille, qui factor eſt omnium.] *All I ſhall add further on this account is that caution of his in a like caſe,* [Et jam hoc loco mundior auditus requiritur & purior ſenſus,] *Let your ſenſes be raiſed to ſpiritual objects.*

Having hinted a few words concerning the Author and Treatiſes, give me leave, having this fair opportunity, to beſpeak the once conſtant attenders upon this good mans Miniſtry, and thoſe are either ſinners or Saints.

As for unconverted ſinners that attended ſuch powerful awakening preaching, and have ſitten out

theſe

theſe loud calls, and pathetical intreaties, and rational Interrogatories, Perſwaſives, Expoſtulations; I may now ſay, Lord have mercy upon you, your caſe is miſerable; hath your Miniſter killed himſelf to ſave your ſouls, and yet will you not be ſaved? have you worn him to the ſtumps, and quenched his natural light with your ſpiritual deadneſs? Have you ſtifled all thoſe convictions you have had under his Miniſtry? And have you not reaſon to fear that Gods Spirit will ſtrive with you no more? Where will you find ſuch another upright Nathaneel, *ſuch a rouzing* Boanerges, *ſuch a melting* Barnabas? *Shall he that ſtudied, travelled, ſweat, wept, ſigh'd, and ſuffered, be brought in as a teſtimony againſt you? He was mighty in prayer; were you ſtupid when he wreſtled with God for you, and was loath to be put off without a ſoul at a Sermon? Did you look about you as perſons unconcerned in Prayer, Sermons, and compaſſionate workings of his ſoul for you? God knows, and you ſhall know, there hath been a Prophet amongſt you; he hath waſht his hands from the guilt of your blood by faithful warnings, your blood be upon your own heads: yea, may not his blood come to be upon your heads? Yea, may not the guilt of the blood of the Son of God be required at your hands? And have you worn out man? are you not content to weary men, but will you weary out God alſo? Shall Chriſt weep over you as over* Jeruſalem, *and ſay as* Luk. 19.42. If thou hadſt known, even thou at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now

they

they are hid from thine eyes. *Though you cannot hear your former Miniſter's living voice, yet I ſend you one ſummons more to your eyes in his own words; if this will not prevail, expect to hear another manner of meſſage from the great* Jehovah, Cut them down, for they cumber the ground; bind them hand and foot, and caſt them into the fire.

1. *Is there not yet ſome ignorant ſouls among you, that have not the knowledg of God, Chriſt, Goſpel myſteries? And if you know not this gift of God, no wonder you ſlight it; if you know not the worth of this jewel, or your need of it, you cannot eſteem or deſire it; a blind man cannot diſtinguiſh colours, ſwallows many a gnat, knows not whither he goeth. God complains,* His people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledg, *Hoſ.* 4 6. Solomon *ſaith,* Without it the heart is not good, *Prov.* 19. 2. *The Apoſtle ſaith,* If our Goſpel be hid, 'tis hid to them that are loſt, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. *And the Prophet ſaith,* He will have no mercy on a people that have no underſtanding, *Iſa.* 27. 11. *Alas! the whole ſoul is miſguided with this blind guide; the will is perverted, affections ranging, conſcience dictates amiſs, for its a witneſs but to what it knows; and thy clock cannot go if the weights be taken off. God Almighty pity you! it's a ſhameful thing to be ignorant, but it's damnning to be wilfully ignorant, yea it will aggravate damnation,* 1 Cor. 15. 34. *Oh now at laſt ply your work, read, pray, confer, meditate: One would think the poor priſoner ſhould take pains to learn*

learn to read, that knows he muſt be hanged if he cannot read his neck-verſe; but if you be negligent, God may ſeal you up in darkneſs, and ſay, if any be ignorant, let him be ignorant, 1 Cor. 14. 38.

2. *Is any among you an hypocrite, that makes a fair ſhew in the fleſh, that paint your outſides with a goodly garniſh of common gifts, and outſide duties, that have owned your godly Miniſter living, and honour his memorial now dead, but have not obeyed from the heart the Doctrine which he delivered, or have not been delivered into the form of Goſpel-doctrine; that are one thing before others in meetings, another thing alone and in your families; that can down with ſome common acts of religiouſneſs, but ſlight ſelf-denying, fleſh-diſpleaſing duties; totally unacquainted with heart-work and mortifying ſpecial luſts, yea rather uſe duties as a cloak to cover ſin, than ſpiritual armour to fight againſt it? Alas, how many is there that were baptized in infancy, join with Chriſtians as with a party or faction, ſlide into a profeſſion, that never came in by the door of regeneration, and ſo deceive themſelves and others. Miniſters judg charitably of Profeſſors, know not mens hearts, and though they expreſs their jealouſie, and ſo give faithful cautions, yet encourage good beginnings, and hopeful ſhews in ſuch an evil day as this is, but may be miſtaken; for who would judg him an enemy that marcheth after Chriſt in duties, wears his colours, learneth his poſtures, hath got the word, keeps his rank, converſeth with Saints in a religious habit and language? yet ſuch may be hypocrites,*

and

and prove apoſtates, witneſs Judas, Simon Magus, Demas, Himeneus, Philetus, *&c. Oh Sirs, as you love your ſouls, ſee to the truth of grace, the root of the matter; be as good or better than you ſeem; the heart-ſearching God knows your home-behaviour, and ſees how your principles are ſtated; and as you would ſee Gods face and meet your godly Miniſter with comfort, be ſincere and ſingle-ſpirited.*

3. *Are any amongſt you worldlings, addicting your ſelves to purſue and dote upon the profits of the world? That ſpend moſt of your time in lading your ſelves with thick clay, and panting after the duſt of the earth? are theſe things ſatisfactory? Have you ever weighed them in the ballance of rectified reaſon? did you never hear of better things? Did you ever hear that riches made men happy? Have you not ſeen riches take wings and leave the poſſeſſor? Or have you not ſeen the rich die as well as poor, and leave their wealth behind them? Alas! the world was never true to any that truſted to it? It's a ſad thing to ſee men almoſt preſſed to death, ſtill call for more weight; to ſee perſons full of drink greedy of more, and complaining they die for thirſt: Oh but ſaith Chriſt,* I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me ſhall never hunger, and he that believeth in me ſhall never thirſt, *Joh.* 6. 35. *The enjoyment of Chriſt quencheth worldly thirſt; the Lord awake your ſpirits to ſee how vaſt a diſtance there is betwixt earth and heaven; and ſtir up your ſpirits to a proportionable care about ſoul-concernments.*

4. *Is there a ſlothful, careleſs, or diſcouraged ſoul among you, that loves his eaſe better than life, that will not take the pains to be ſaved, or that is not reſolved for heaven, but in ſuſpenſe, as halting b twixt two opinions; could have a months mind after Chriſt were it not for the inconveniences that attend him, difficulties in Religion diſcourage them, and having much ſenſe which bears ſway, diſtruſt prevails, and ſhouts faith to the heart, ſo that the poor ſoul falls flat at Satans feet, grows liſtleſs to duty; as one who ſees the Well dry, breaks or throws away his pitcher; ſome are ready to ſay as thoſe,* Jer. 2. 25. *when God ſaith,* With hold thy foot from being unſhod, [i.e. *do not by putting off thy ſhoos addreſs thy ſelf to a ſlothful or an adulterous bed*] and thy throat from thirſt, [i.e. *forbear thy ſinful thirſt and deſires after idols and vanities*] but thou ſaidſt, there is no hope, [*it's to no purpoſe, paſt cure, paſt care*] I have loved ſtrangers, and after them will I go, [*you may ſave a labour, I am too far gone to turn now, God hath caſt me off, I am deſperate, and may as well take my fill of eaſe and ſenſual pleaſures, for this is all the heaven I am like to have.*] *This is a dreadful caſe, and ſuch ſinners ſurely underſtand not what it is to be damned, and have not learned Chriſts readineſs to pardon and accept penitent ſinners. That was a wretched anſwer that that blaſphemous* Arrian *made (executed at* Norwich *in Queen* Elizabeth's *days) to ſuch as urged him to repent, that Chriſt might pardon him; deſperately replied,* And is that God of yours ſo merci-

ful

ful indeed as to pardon so readily those that blaspheme him, then I renounce and defie him, [horresa referens.] *Oh that ever such an hellish word should ever be belched out of the black mouth of a living man! but is not this the language of some mens hearts and lives? do not some say it's to no purpose to turn, God hath given me up, and it cannot be helpt, I am like to go to hell, and I will be damned for somewhat. Oh horrible! that sinners should so desperately throw away their precious immortal souls! and seek to murder Christ as man, by sinning, as God, by despairing. Alas, that ever sinners should so kick and spurn at the warm bowels of love, or despise the riches of his goodness, or sin though grace abound! but men abuse grace, on both hands turning grace into lasciviousness by presumption and despair; but the Sun hardens clay, and brings forth a stinking smell from a dirty dunghill; Justice will be glorified upon those that would not honour Christ and grace by believing.*

But God forbid, my Brethren, that you should split on either of these dangerous rocks, or run your souls upon the sands of sloth or sensuality. Oh shall not the calls of God, the death of Christ, the intreaties of your Minister, checks of your own conscience, nothing avail? for Gods sake, for Christs sake, for your own souls sakes, look after a title to blessed Jesus here so lively described, you cannot be damned at so cheap a rate as others; a Gospel-hell is hotter than a Law-hell; a seeming Christian shall sink lower than an ignorant hea-

then; a lifting up to heaven in priviledges, makes the fall lower in torments. But you'l ſay, God forbid, we would gladly have Chriſt, and hope we have him, and pardon by him; I ſay, Amen, *would to God it were ſo; but be not deceived, many that pretend to take him, miſtake him, and ſo miſs of him; it's not a conceit, but receit of Chriſt that will advantage you; the ſhadow doth not ſhelter except you be under it, the plaiſter cures not unleſs applied; the phyſick works not unleſs taken; Chriſt is of none effect to you without faith, faith will do you no good, except it be unfeigned, faith is not right if it divide Chriſt, Chriſt is divided if not taken as Lord as well as Saviour, God is reſolved not to parcel out his Son by piecemeal, as men ſell wares in their ſhops, cut off what every one likes and no more; ſo he would have cuſtomers more than a good many, one would have Chriſt as Prieſt to pardon, not as King to govern; they judg him a troubleſome gueſt, cumberſome wares, if indeed he will be maſter, and rob them of their luſts, and rule them by his laws, ſaying, We will not have this man to rule over us; the great controverſie hath been in Nations, Churches, hearts, whether or no Jeſus muſt be ſole Lord and Maſter; God and Grace are for Chriſts preheminence; God hath ſet his Son upon his holy hill; Grace ſets the Crown upon his head; Satan and luſt contradict it. The Devil, ſaith* Luther, *hates that word more than any in the Bible,* Pſal. 110. 1. שבריכיני *i e.* Sit thou on my right hand; *and a corrupt heart takes his part, but his arrows ſhall*

be

be ſharp in the hearts of the Kings enemies, he will rule in the midſt of them to converſion or confuſion of them. Oh be you Virgin-followers of the Lamb, accept of him, give up your ſelves to him, and you ſhall find him what is here reported of him, the choiceſt gift and beſt Maſter.

As for you into whoſe ſanctified ſouls God hath dropt this rich and rare gift; had I time and room I might ſay much for counſel and comfort to theſe conſecrated ones.

You, you, above others have reaſon to adore free grace, that gave you ſuch a Miniſter who laid open the riches of Grace before you, who threapt kindneſs upon you, and was loth to leave you with a denial; free-grace came with the key of Spirit and Word, and opened your hearts as he did the heart of Lidia, *and took poſſeſſion of you for the King of Glory. Oh who or what were you, that the higheſt Majeſty would ſtand ſo long knocking, and ſaying,* Open to me, my ſiſter, my love! Cant. 5. 3, 4, 5. *And when you ſnorted in your beds, or gave him a churliſh anſwer, he put his hand by the hole of the door, and cauſed your bowels to moan after him, yea he left behind ſweet-ſmelling myrrh upon the handles of the lock, which cauſed you to run after him with love-ſick motions till you found and enjoyed him. And Oh how ſweet was the enjoyment of ſo dear a friend!* Let their money periſh with them (*ſaid that noble Marqueſs* Galeaſius) that eſteem all the riches in the world worth more than one hours com-

munion with Jeſus Chriſt. *I ſhall not anticipate the work of this enſuing Diſcourſe, yet give me leave to propound theſe few branches of counſel as a ſupplement to it.*

1. *Be not miſtaken in your title to this gift; many are: miſtakes are eaſie and dangerous, thouſands of ſouls are like the man at* Athens *that laid claim to every Merchants Ship that came to ſhore; the main lyes in making good your title; he that boaſteth of a falſe gift, is like clouds and winds without rain,* Prov. 25. 14. *a groundleſs vapour; what are you better for others imagining, or your own conceiting that Chriſt is yours, if it be not found ſo at the day of trial? your diſappointment will but aggravate your torment: God prevent it; do you ſeek to prevent it by a ſpeedy impartial ſearch, and calling in aid from heaven to diſcover your ſtate, and know the worſt in time. And as you may think you have a title to Chriſt when you have not; ſo on the contrary, you may (at leaſt in a temptation) think you have no title to Chriſt, and yet he may be yours; your friend whom you ſeek may be in the houſe, coming in at the back door, when you expect him at the fore door; you have him by faith, though you feel him not in ſenſe.*

2. *Be moſt jealous of your ſelves when you have found moſt ſenſible incomes of his grace; Satan like a Pirate envies and makes moſt at a richly laden Ship; Cheats ſtrike in with a young heir, when he hath newly received his rents; you are never in more danger than after your ſweeteſt enlargements; watch and pray, believe and watch,*

let

let your hand be on your purſe, and your eye on the thief; he will look you in the face like an angel of light, and rob you; when a white devil allures you, he is worſe than a black devil that affrights you; as one ſaith, I love a rumbling raging devil, comparatively, he can do us leaſt hurt when we ſuſpect him moſt; a calm at Sea doth more miſchief than a ſtorm; a lethargy of ſecurity is more dangerous than a feaver of ſoul-trouble. Take heed to your ſelves that you loſe not what you have wrought, but that you receive a full reward; let this gift of God make you aſpire after the higheſt enjoyment of God in eternal life, which is alſo the gift of God.

3. *Live upon and live up to this bleſſed gift of God; improve Jeſus Chriſt. The height of true Chriſtian perfection, is a full view of this lovely Jeſus, a conformity to him, and deriving all influences from him; there's freſh ſprings in him, new unheard-of treaſures, an unknown-land of grace and delights in him; ſet your ciſtern under the cock, put the mouth of faith to the full breaſts of Goſpel-promiſes made in Jeſus Chriſt. Pray much, give God no reſt; tell God there's enough in his Son of that you want; in him are* hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledg, *Col.* 2. 3. *why ſhould you want, when there's enough laid up for you; why ſhould you be afraid to ask, when all is of free-gift! God is more willing to give than you are to receive; it eaſeth his heart, as it were, to give of the riches of his grace to ſinners King* James *gave to Sir* Henry Rich (*after Earl of* Holland) 3000 l. *at once, who had wiſht for ſo much money;* You

think *(ſaith the King)* now you have a great purchaſe, but I am more delighted to think how much I have pleaſur'd you in giving, than you are in receiving. *Gods gifts finding room and welcome in your hearts, is infinite content to an open-handed giver; but you muſt neither ſlight nor trifle away his gifts; you live all of begging, beggars muſt not be waſters,* (Nemo prodiget qui mendicat) *own God in all, give him the glory. When thou haſt thy beſt Suit on, remember who bought it, made it, put it on, keeps it on: what haſt thou that's not received? thank thy good Maſter for ſo bountiful an alms.*

4. *Admire free-grace in this great gift: I have heard of a gracious Chriſtian that lying down in his bed, and riſing up, had this in his mind and mouth,* Thanks be to God for his unſpeakable gift. *Jeſus Chriſt is ſuch a gift as never came out of the hands of God, and was never received by the hands of man; a gift that conſecrates all other gifts, as the altar ſanctified the gift laid thereon; all Gods gifts to us without this, would in ſome ſort be giftleſs gifts, crumbs caſt to dogs,* as Luther call'd the Turkiſh *Empire; without which all our perſons and performances are no better than dung in Gods account, yea in Saints eſteem, as ſo many cyphers without a figure; yea, without Chriſt we our ſelves had been dead and damn'd wretches. Chriſt is the darling of Heaven, the delight of Saints, the object of Angels admiration: If Heaven and earth were conſolidated into one maſſy Pearl it would not be as the duſt on the ballance to*

bleſſed Jeſus; caſt in all the holy Angels and rational ſouls, they would all be but trifles compared with this Lamb of God. He is the beſt part of heaven, all heaven, more than heaven; the King makes the Court, his preſence makes heaven, which would be a black nothing, a Tohu, *and* Bohu, *an hell without his company. Oh that real Saints were tranſported with admiration of Gods love in giving Chriſt, and Chriſts love in giving himſelf for and to them! this will be their work for ever; begin it here, and cry out with the Martyr in the flames,* None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt. *Be content to be burnt in this heavenly Sun, ſo you may more fully ſee and admire him. Long to ſee his bleſſed face upon his Throne, though you could not ſee his face in the fleſh. Live to him here, that you may live with him hereafter. Since he is given to you, give your ſelves back to him. Come and ſee, make ſtrange diſcoveries; the nearer you approach to him, the better you'l like him. We are dim-ſighted, and unaffected here; but perfect faculties, and an endleſs eternity will compleat our praiſes of Him. Thy beſt is reſerved till the laſt. Read and live, and learn what Chriſt is; but die and learn better; ſight will make you perfect Scholars. Whither this Chriſt-admiring friend is gone, whither I pray God bring your immortal ſouls, with*

Your Souls real friend

in Chriſtian Offices,

O. H.

Joh. 4. 10. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto her, if thou kneweſt the gift of God, and who it is that ſaith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldeſt have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.*

THE firſt thing that God created in the world was Light, *Gen.* 1. 3. and the firſt work of God in the renovation or new Creation of loſt man, is to create light in the heart of ſuch as dwell in the region of darkneſs, and ſit in the ſhadow of death. The natural man is darkneſs, and knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned. And (*Ignoti nulla cupido*) what we know not, we do not, we cannot deſire; one great reaſon then why men ſubmit not themſelves to the government and ways of Chriſt, is becauſe their minds are not enlightned thorowly, and in a manner ſuitably to the nature and worth thereof; ſo long as they feel no neceſſity of Chriſt, ſee no beauty or excellency in him, they keep themſelves at a diſtance from him and their own happineſs. *Hagar* was near the Well, but her eyes were not opened, and there-

therefore ſhe made not towards it. So this Woman to whom Chriſt ſpoke in the Text, was near the well of living water, the fountain of all grace and comfort, yet her eyes were ſhut, and ſhe knew it not, of which Chriſt does admoniſh her in theſe words, *If thou kneweſt the gift of God, and who it is that ſaith unto thee, &c.* They are the words of our bleſſed Saviour to the *Samaritan* woman at *Jacob's* Well near the City *Sychar*, and part of that conference he had with her in his Diſciples abſence.

In this Chapter you have a relation of Chriſts Journey from *Judea* by *Samaria* to *Galilee*, together with the occaſion thereof, and many obſervable paſſages in the way. I ſhall only and but lightly touch upon thoſe that concern this Woman in whoſe perſon is exemplified that ſaying of the Prophet *Iſa.* 65. 1 *I am ſought of them that asked not for me, I am found of them that ſought me not; I ſaid behold me, behold me, to a Nation that was not called by my name.* The ſtory is this; Our Saviour Chriſt leaving *Judea*, retires to *Galilee*; now the way to *Galilee* lay through *Samaria*; as he went, there fell out an extraordinary thing, or as *Calvin* calls it, a happy chance: for coming to *Sychar*, which place (though its name be no where elſe mentioned in Scripture) is commonly thought to be *Sichem*, ſituated on the ſide of mount *Gerizzim*, the inhabitants whereof were murdered by *Simeon* and *Levi*. *Jerome* (who thinks that 'tis corruptly read *Sychar* for *Sichem*) ſaith in his time it

was

was called *Neapolis*. Here was a noted Well of ſpringing water, which did bear *Jacob*'s name; now Chriſt coming hither in the heat of the day about the ſixth hour, *i.e.* at noon; he was weary, and ſate on the Well as one weary, or repreſenting the geſture of a tired man, without ſeeming to ſtay there to any other purpoſe, though in the ſecret of his Providence he had an intent to convert the people of that place; at the ſame time comes a *Samaritan* woman to draw water, a *Samaritan* by Nation and Religion; Jeſus asked her water to drink, as to refreſh himſelf in his wearineſs and thirſt, ſo alſo to give occaſion of diſcourſe for the Salvation of her and many others. Thus he that was rich and Lord of all, became ſo poor in the days of his fleſh, as to ask a cup of cold water, and that of a ſtranger, and one that denies him with ſcorn and diſdain. The woman anſwers him readily and roughly, *How is it that thou being a Jew askeſt water of me which am a Samaritan?* (and the reaſon is annexed either by the woman or Evangeliſt) *for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans*. He doth not mean no commerce at all (for the Diſciples were gone to buy meat) but not to ask or receive courteſies. Theſe *Samaritans* were a mixture of Pagan Nations, who being brought thither by the King of *Aſſyria*, (2 *King.* 17. 24.) after the captivity of the *Iſraelites*, had built themſelves a Temple on Mount *Gerizzim*, and together with ſome Apoſtate *Jews* had there eſtabliſhed a falſe Worſhip

in imitation of that at *Jeruſalem*; therefore they were excommunicated by the *Jews*, who accounted them wicked and profane: Likewiſe the *Samaritans* thought themſelves polluted if they touched a *Jew*, ſo they mutually hated and deſpiſed each other. Chriſt in the Text is not moved to anger with theſe terms of hoſtility; but proceeds to preach the Grace of God, and power of his Spirit, *If thou kneweſt the gift of God, &c.* The woman ſtill perſiſts in contradicting him, and firſt chargeth him with promiſing more than he was able to perform, *The well is deep, and thou haſt nothing to draw with*; for the *Jews* and *Samaritans* held it a pollution to uſe each others veſſels.

2. She accuſeth him of arrogancy becauſe he preferred himſelf before the Patriarch *Jacob*; *This Well ſufficed him and his family, and who makeſt thou thy ſelf to be? what better water ſpeakeſt thou of?* but Chriſt ſtill bears with her. O what contradictions of ſinners did he endure! how long is it ere Chriſt can make men willing to imbrace Goſpel offers and terms of mercy! He proves himſelf to be greater than *Jacob*, by ſhewing the difference between this Myſtical and Spiritual water ſpringing and refreſhing to eternity (which *Jacob* could not give) and that which *Jacob* gave his Sons, which could only quench a preſent thirſt. Still the woman proceeds in her ſcoffing and opprobrious expreſſions, (O how hard is it to believe their word of whoſe authority we are not well perſwaded)

Give

Give me this water, ſaith ſhe ironically, or floutingly, *q.d.* thou makeſt great brags, but I ſee nothing; if thou canſt do any thing, let me ſee it indeed. Queſtionleſs the woman knew well enough that Chriſt ſpeaks of ſpiritual water; but becauſe ſhe deſpiſed him, ſhe eſteemed all his promiſes as good as nothing. 'Tis high time Chriſt ſhould now bid go call her husband, having born with her perverſe anſwers all this while; he now ſmites her with the ſenſe of her own ſin, and his divine Majeſty, before whom ſhe had deported her ſelf ſo ſecurely and audaciouſly; ſo are confident ſinners to be wounded that they may be healed, and that the only way to deal with ſuch as are obſtinate and dally with heavenly things, is to convince them thorowly, and to awake them from their ſecurity and careleſneſs in ſo great an intereſt as their own ſalvation: She knew that ſhe lived in ſin, yet her conſcience could not awake till a Divine hand ſeemed to touch the wounds thereof: Here alſo the tender mercy of Chriſt is to be obſerved; he ſaid not, Go thou Adultreſs and call thy partner in ſin, thy pretended husband, that you may hear your dooms; (as 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10.) but he mildly ſtileth him husband whom he knew to be an adulterer, that ſhe might neither preſume any longer to conteſt with the ſearcher of hearts, nor deſpair of his mercy, whoſe lenity in reproving ſpake him merciful to cure and amend, not buſie and malicious to find fault and accuſe. Hereupon ſhe gave him ſome more reverence,

call-

calling him a Prophet, and he fully reveals himself to her, to the conversion of her and many other *Samaritans*.

In this verse we have Christs mild and gracious answer to the womans irreverent and uncivil denial of his small request of a little water to drink; wherein observe,

1. The Preface, *Jesus answered and said.*

2. The Answer it self; in which is first a Supposition, *If thou knewest, &c.*

2. A Deduction therefrom, *Thou wouldest have asked, &c.* Εἰ ἤδεις τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τίς ἐστιν ὁ λέγων σοι, Δός μοι πεῖν, σὺ ἂν ἤτησας αὐτὸν, καὶ ἔδωκεν ἂν σοι ὕδωρ ζῶν.

The gift of God] what is meant by this gift? some think he means this of the Spirit which was to be given, *Joh.* 7. 37. others the Grace of God offered by Christ, or the opportunity of Salvation tendered by Christ to this woman; so the Evangelical call and grace is called Δῶρον Θεοῦ, *Ephes.* 2. 8 (as *Grotius* observes) and then the sense is, *If thou didst but understand how great the benefit of this occasion is which God freely put into thine hands, thou wouldest be so far from denying me that water, that thou wouldest ask of me, &c.*

But most and best Expositors take it to be meant of Christ himself, both because the Article shews it to be some eminent or excellent gift. He saith not indefinitely δωρεὰν *donum*, nor in the Plural number πᾶς δῶρεας *dona*, but τὴν δωρεὰν, *donum hoc vel illud*, that gift Christ as given

given to the world, *Joh.* 3. 16. and offered to this woman by the Father, and alſo that which follows ſeems to be exegetical of this, *If thou kneweſt the gift of God and who it is, &c.* [καὶ τίς ἐστιν] *expoſitio ejus quod præcedit,* [*& quis quantiſq; &c.*] i.e. *Filius Dei, Salvator Mundi,* Grotius. I read theſe two members (ſaith *Calvin*) *if thou didſt know, and who it is*, ſo diſtinctly, that the latter is as it were an interpretation of the former; and he adds, the ſenſe will be more plain, if inſtead of the copulative conjunction [*and*] you put the expoſitive particle, [*Namely*] thus, *if thou didſt know the gift of God, namely, who it is that talketh with thee*; for this was a ſingular benefit of God, to have Chriſt preſent, who brought with him everlaſting life. And hence we learn that we do then know who Chriſt is, when we underſtand what the Father hath given us in him, and what good things he himſelf offereth to us.

ὕδωρ ζῶν, Water in ſeveral places hath different ſignifications: Here and in the *Apocalypſt* (ſaith *Grotius*) I doubt not but that it ſignifies the Evangelical Doctrine, as it contains thoſe things which are neceſſary and ſufficient to obtain eternal life. And many of the Fathers differ not much from this, who take it to mean the water of Baptiſm, as it is a ſolemn profeſſion of that Doctrine; *Piſcator* and others take it to be meant of the holy Spirit, as appears by the 14 verſ. *A well of water*

ſpringing up to eternal life, Joh. 7. 39. So *Cyril* ſaith it ſignifies [ζωπαιοντᾶτε πνεῦμα]ος δόσιν,] a quickening gift of the Spirit. But with *Hammond* I conceive it denotes the Grace of God exhibited in Chriſt. So *Theophylact*, [τὴν χαειν τᾶ ἁχιᾶ πνεύμα]Θ,] *the Grace of the holy Spirit.* And *Calvin*, all the whole Grace of renovation, *aqua viva*, not metonymically, as quickning water, but metaphorically (ſaith *Piſcator*) becauſe 'tis ever ſpringing, never failing, not like ſtanding or dead water.

One general Doctrine ariſeth from the whole Text, as it ſtands related to the Context: *That Jeſus Chriſt is meek and gracious, ſlow to anger, and full of compaſſion, bearing with the ignorance and folly, perverſeneſs, and reſiſtance of them he intends to ſave.*

How often did this woman provoke him? how long did ſhe withſtand him? what feminine artifices doth ſhe uſe to elude, breaking jeſts, making captious fallacies, as one diſpoſed to ſlight and jeer whatever he ſpake, *&c.* yet he would take no denial from her, but preſented his gracious deſign, as one that heard not. O the unutterable treaſure of Grace in Chriſt which all her provocations could not overcome! In all this diſcourſe we may read our ſtiffneſs and ſtubbornneſs, Chriſts gentleneſs and goodneſs.

1. Doct. *Chriſt is the gift of God.*

2. Doct. *One great reaſon why men refuſe Chriſt and their own ſalvation, is becauſe they know*

know him not. Ignorance is the cauſe of rejecting Chriſt and his Grace; this keeps ſouls from him; Chriſt and holineſs have no enemies but the ignorant; did men know what Chriſt is, and what the love of God was in giving him, they muſt have iron-hearts indeed if they could deſpiſe and reſiſt him. *If thou kneweſt, &c.*

3 Doct. *The bleſſed Son of God made himſelf very poor, ſtooped exceeding low for the good of ſinners: And who it is that ſaith unto thee, give me to drink*; He was Lord of Heaven and Earth, the world was his, and the fulneſs thereof, the fowls of the mountains, the beaſts of the forreſt, and the cattel upon a thouſand hills, yet he begs a little cold water of a poor woman to quench his thirſt! O aſtoniſhing condeſcenſion! deep humiliation! Bleſſed Jeſus whither did thy love to ſinners carry thee!

4. Doct. *Knowledg in the mind makes way for a ſpontaneous motion of the will and affections; the underſtanding is to the will, as the needle to the thread. If thou kneweſt, thou wouldeſt.* When the underſtanding is enlightned with eye-ſalve, and hath clear apprehenſions of Chriſt, as tranſcendently excellent, then the Will puts forth it ſelf in its ſtrongeſt deſires after him; as the eye tranſmits the beauty it beholds to the heart, ſo when there is an aſſent to the things revealed of Chriſt in the Word, when we do with open face behold as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord in the Goſpel, then we are ready to accept of him and

his Grace with suitable affections; this is plain in the connexion in the Text, and from the latter sweet connexion, *Thou wouldest have asked, I would have given, &c.*

5. Doct. *If we can but rightly ask, Christ will readily give; ask and have, is the language of the Gospel.* The Grace of God is free, but it must be begged: He will be inquired of, and sought unto, for that he intends and promises to give; though this woman was a *Samaritan*, yet he would not deny her living water had she desired it of him. We must be touched with the knowledg and sense of our maladies and poverty, before we will seek the remedy. Therefore the Lord inviteth not the drunken but the dry; not the full but the hungry, that they may eat and drink. To what end should Christ be sent unto us with the fulness of the spirit, unless we were empty? and 'tis not enough to feel our wants, so as to see our need of help from another, unless the hope of present or near help be added thereunto; because if we only see and feel our wants, we should do nothing else but groan under our miseries, and pine away with sorrow; but this is true and profitable knowledg of the Grace of God, when we know that the same is offered to us in Christ, and that it is reached unto us by his hand, and so our hearts are inflamed with vehement propassions and desires after it.

6 Doct.

6. Doct. *Grace is the gift of Christ, he is the fountain whence this water flows: I would have given thee living water.* Christ gives grace to them that ask it of him: as we should ask spiritual blessings ardently and importunately, so he gives them most freely and liberally, *Joh.* 6. 27.

7. Doct. *True Grace never fails; those that once have it, shall never lose it; whoever drinks of this water of life which Christ gives, shall never perish.* 'Tis ὕδωρ ζῶν, denoting the perpetuity, everlastingness of it. Grace is sure, and the priviledges of it are sure; this is the advantage of spiritual comforts, that they do not only satisfie our desires, but secure us against our fears: Once in Christ, and for ever preserved in Christ. This certainty of Grace, the comfort of a Christian is not *respectu rei*, but *Dei*. One of the Fathers brings in the flesh, saying, *Ego deficiam*, I will surely fail and miscarry; and the world, *Ego decipiam*, I will intice and deceive them; and Satan, *Ego eripiam*, I will snatch and carry them away: But God saith, *Ego custodiam*, I will keep them: there lyes our safety and security, he hath said, *I will never leave them nor forsake them.*

1. Doct. *Christ is the gift of God.* Christ in a peculiar and eminent manner is termed Gods gift. It is the common mode and fashion of great persons, to give rich and magnifi-

cent gifts suitable to their state and quality, regarding more what becomes them to give, than their petitioners to ask or receive. The great *Alexander* could tell his suitors (whom he had more astonished than relieved with his bounty and favour) *That though the thing might be too great for them to receive, yet it was not too great for* Alexander *to give.* If dust and asnes can speak and think at this rate, O how large is the heart of God! The great and glorious God out of his infinitely overflowing love and unsearchable riches of Grace, hath conferred upon poor lost self destroying, undeserving, and ill deserving mankind, such a gift so transcendently superlatively excellent and wonderful, that if God the Lord should create an understanding-faculty of man or Angel millions of degrees more apprehensive and vigorous than if all the men and Angels that are or possibly might be created, were contemperated in one, yet could not their understanding so see the incomparable worth and superexcellent beauty of this gift, but that there would remain unseen treasures of loveliness, and oceans of excellencies never known, to the amazement and admiration of all creatures to all eternity: Nay, it implys an eternal contradiction that the Creatures should see to the bottom of the Creator, or that which is finite fathom that which is infinite.

This gift is promised in the Old, and those Promises are fulfilled in the New Testament:

Hear

Hear what the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſaith, *Iſa.* 9.6. *Unto us a child is born, a ſon is given.* A Child born in reſpect of his Humanity; a Son given in reſpect of his Deity; and both as already done in regard of Gods purpoſe, and the infallible certainty of his promiſe, which is as ſure as if it were already done; and in regard of the fruits and benefits thereof to men, though it was to be accompliſhed above 700 years after; and in the fulneſs of time God ſent his Son actually given both to us and for us, to effect our Salvation, *Joh.* 3. 16. *God ſo loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believed on him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.*

All I purpoſe to do in the proſecution of this Doctrine, is to ſhew the excellency of this gift, and then make Application. A great attempt indeed, and far above the utmoſt reach of a finite capacity! *for who can declare his generation?* what pen though dipt in the river of life that flows under the Sanctuary; what tongue, though ſhap't out of all the Angels in Heaven, and watered with the milk and wine of that good land, can ſufficiently expreſs the glory and excellency of this heart-raviſhing flower of Angels, this living Ark of heaven, the ſong of Angels and glorified Saints, the joy and glory of that new land, the crown and garland of his Fathers delight, the ſweetneſs of the garden of God, the wonder of wonders for eternity to Angels and men;

that fair tree of life, the branches whereof cannot for the narrowneſs of the place have room to grow within the huge and capacious borders of the Heaven of heavens! How impoſſible is it therefore to contain him in the narrow compaſs of the words or thoughts of any mortal creature! I cannot better expreſs what he is, than by telling you I cannot expreſs him. Yet ſomething I ſhall endeavour to ſpeak of his inexpreſſible worth under the notion of a Gift in theſe particulars. Chriſt and Heaven cannot be praiſed Hyperbolically. No danger of exceſs, ſpeak I as much, think you as much as we can of Chriſt.

1. Chriſt is a moſt free gift; we uſe to ſay *what's freer than gift*? I may well add, What gift freer than Chriſt? whether we reſpect the giver, or look on the receiver, 'tis eaſie to judg that this gift is abſolutely free and undeſerved. In relation to God; it is beyond all doubt, that there was nothing in man that might move God to give him Chriſt; no worthineſs in man, no profit by man, nothing but loathſomneſs. The promiſe of Chriſt coming in the fleſh, was an abſolute unconditional promiſe. Hence 'tis ſaid Chriſt is not only ſent, delivered, &c but given; not paid nor ſold, he is not returned to us by way of payment, for who hath given ought that he ſhould be repayed; neither is he ſold to us in conſideration of ought to be paid by us; for what can we return to God that is not his own already?

Rom.

Rom. 11. 35, 36. 1 *Chron.* 29. 11, 12, 13, 14. If *Jacob* could ſay, *He was not worthy of the leaſt of all his mercies*, Gen. 32. 10 Who can pretend to be worthy of this greateſt? but Chriſt is given, freely beſtowed of his meer grace and bounty, without reſpect of ought in us that might invite or induce him thereunto, *Rom.* 5. 6, 8, 10. *Tit.* 3 5. without any expectation of ought from us that might be beneficial to himſelf. *Can a man be profitable unto God? Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that a man is righteous? Is it any gain to him that we make our ways perfect?* Job 22. 23. & 35. 5, 8. No, *our goodneſs cannot extend it ſelf unto God*, Pſal. 16. 2. Look on man, and what is there to be found in him but ſin and miſery! He is not only without ſtrength, and ſo deſpicable, cannot help himſelf; but ungodly alſo, and ſo loathſome, deſerving no help from others. What is man that God was thus mindful of him! a poor, naked, indigent, helpleſs and wretched creature! and all this wo and miſery is brought upon him by his own choice and act! he is not only miſerable but wicked; a rebel as well as a beggar; not only caſt out into the open field to the loathing of his perſon, but found in the field of war treacherouſly fighting againſt his Lord and Maker. Man was in a ſtate of darkneſs, ſlavery, rebellion, poverty, pain, ignominy, baniſhment, nakedneſs, filthineſs, deformity, ſickneſs, death, perdition, every thing that's naught

naught and miſerable; all the woes in the world, were they a thouſand times greater, are but a faint repreſentation of the miſeries of man by nature.

Now if a gift may be free when beſtowed on a friend, how much more when given to an enemy? why, God gave us his Son to reconcile us to himſelf, when we were not only ſtrangers from him, but enemies to him, *Col.* 1. 21. O the riches of his meer mercy and grace! Is not that gift free that is beſtowed on ſinners, ſtrangers, enemies? *Epheſ.* 2. 12, 13, 14. God never did, nor never will ſell his Grace, his Son, to any; none can have Chriſt but thoſe that come empty; a full hand can hold nothing.

Fix your thoughts on the terms expreſſed in that Evangelical Proclamation, *Iſa.* 55. 1. *Ho every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.*

2. Chriſt is a moſt full gift, *He is full of Grace and truth,* Joh. 1. 14. Col. 1. 29. *It pleaſed the Father that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell*; he fills all in all. There is in this gift of God a fulneſs of ſufficiency, and a fulneſs of redundancy; enough for himſelf, and to fill all perſons, all things; there is enough in Chriſt for every ſoul, and for the ſupply of every want; whatever the heart of man can want or wiſh is to be had in Chriſt. That's a very

a very full expreſſion, *Col.* 2. 9. *In him dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily.* Fulneſs in the abſtract; he is not full only, but Fullneſs it ſelf; fulneſs not of the ciſtern but of the fountain, Gods fulneſs; fulneſs of the Godhead, not in ſhadows, types, repreſentations, as Gods preſence filled the Temple, Camp, Mount; but bodily, that is *eſſentialiter, preſentialiter, potentialiter*; in regard of eſſence, preſence and power; the expreſſion is yet more Emphatical, fulneſs dwells in Chriſt, not ſometimes but always there: there's a fulneſs in the Sea, but 'tis ebbing and flowing; a fulneſs of the Moon, but it is growing and decreaſing; a fulneſs in the creature, but it is going and coming, up and down; but in Chriſt is not only, but dwells fulneſs; yea in Chriſt dwells all fulneſs; there was a fulneſs of beauty in *Abſalom*, but not a fulneſs of truth and ſincerity; a fulneſs of wiſdom in *Solomon*, but not of conſtancy and ſtedfaſtneſs; he gave his heart to pleaſure and folly. A fulneſs of Policy in *Achitophel*, but not of holineſs and faithfulneſs to his Prince; yea it proved fulneſs of folly to hang himſelf. A fulneſs of ſtrength in *Sampſon*, but not of faith and courage of mind; he was ſtrong in body, but ſoft and impotent in mind, and was overcome by a woman. There's *Ahiatus* and ſome emptineſs in every creature; yea, an Angels fulneſs ſits neighbour to pure nothing. But in Chriſt is all fulneſs. The Ark or holy Cheſt in the

Taber-

Tabernacle did typifie Chriſt in whom God hath treaſured up all perfection of wiſdom, grace, power, goodneſs and mercy; for by this fulneſs *Beza* underſtands the accumulation or heaping up of all divine gifts in a moſt copious and plentiful manner, which the Schoolmen call habitual grace diſtinct from the grace of union. God giveth not the Spirit by meaſure unto him; *He anointed him with the oyl of gladneſs above his fellows.* But this rich treaſure is not hid, this full ark not locked up; for from the fulneſs overflowing in Chriſt, all Believers receive their ſufficiency and fulneſs, *Joh.* 2. 16 *Of his fulneſs we all receive, and grace for grace*; that is grace anſwerable to every communicable grace in Chriſt. If there be light in the Sun, the air cannot be dark; if there be ſap in the ſtock the branches cannot be dry. If there be fulneſs in the fountain the ſtreams cannot be empty. Therefore the Apoſtle prays, *Eph.* 3 19, *That they might be filled with all the fulneſs of God*; that is, the Divine fulneſs which is diffuſive and communicable; *that Chriſt* (in whom dwells all fulneſs) *may dwell in their hearts by faith, that they may be able to comprehend with all Saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Chriſt, which paſſeth knowledg, and might receive abundance of grace, and that his grace may more than over abound towards them.*

3. Chriſt is a moſt kind gift, a gift of love;

love; there is a wonderful and aſtoniſhing *Philanthropy*, kindneſs and love of God towards man appearing in his giving Chriſt, *Tit.* 3. 5. It is not the gift many times, but the love and good will of the giver that makes it excellent in the eye of the receiver.

Now Chriſt is a moſt excellent incomparable gift, flowing out of a bottomleſs boundleſs fountain of pure and dear love, *Joh.* 3. 16. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten ſon*, &c. *He ſo loved*, that is, ſo admirable was his love, that it cannot be expreſſed, nay it far exceeds our higheſt conceptions. Gods love was herein as himſelf, infinite, incomprehenſible and everlaſting; in the womb of this love Chriſt was conceived, and thence brought forth. When God made the world, he intended to give an evidence of his Power in ordering and governing all Creatures (even the moſt ungovernable): He manifeſts his infinite Wiſdom, he appointed the Lake of fire and brimſtone to declare the ſeverity of his Juſtice; but he gave his Son to be by his own death the Redeemer of loſt ſinners; and herein his purpoſe was to demonſtrate to the world the tranſcendency of his love. This is the higheſt expreſſion and fulleſt demonſtration of his love to the Creature, not only that ever was, but that ever can be; for in this love God only acts to the uttermoſt; he never ſhewed ſo much of his Power, Wiſdom and Wrath, but he could have ſhewed more.

But

But he hath no greater inſtance of his love than Chriſt, to give ſuch a Son for ſuch ſinners! O the ſuperlative, matchleſs, unlimited love and grace of God, tranſcending the reach of the higheſt finite capacity! He had done exceeding well for man as he made him at firſt, for he put him into a very good eſtate, ſtampt his own Image upon him, made him above all other Creatures to be his favourite; but he fooliſhly ſinned and fell, and loſt all his happineſs. Well, what did God now do, did he let man alone, ſhut up his bowels againſt him, fall upon him with his utmoſt wrath? Did he ſay, Nay ſince it is thus, let him even riſe as he hath fallen; ſince he would be ſo fooliſh as for a trifle to break with me, let him die and rot, and periſh for ever, I'le do no more for him, *&c.* O no! not ſuch a word or thought did paſs from the gracious God towards his miſerable Creature. But will he pardon him without ſatisfaction? no, ſin ſhall be puniſhed, but the puniſhment ſhall be laid on his Son; O the height of Juſtice! and ſo the ſinner ſhall be acquitted; O the depth of mercy! There is more of mercy in pardoning this way, than in abſolute pardoning. Meer pardon and ſalvation it ſelf had not ſo much of mercy and love in them, as what was in giving Chriſt. 'Tis more for a King to put his Son in the Traytors ſtead, and take the Malefactors chains and ſuffer, than juſt to pardon, *&c.* God might have redeemed us ano-

another way, but he could not ſhew ſo much love another way.

God gives many rich gifts and royal favours to his people, together with Chriſt, as ſo many tokens and pledges of his love: But herein is the very top and *zenith* of love, the greateſt evidence imaginable of Gods bounty and goodneſs. *God commendeth his love towards us* (as unparallel'd) *in that when we were ſinners Chriſt died for us, Rom.* 5. 8. Herein he lays open and naked to us the tendereſt bowels of mercy and love; infinite goodneſs here makes free love ſwell without it ſelf, like a boundleſs River impatient of its banks; 'tis a love that could not flow within its own channel; O! the boundleſs breadth, the bottomleſs depth of the love of God in Chriſt! a Sea of love is nothing, it hath a bottom; a Heaven of love is nothing, it hath a brim; but infinite love hath no bounds, 'tis unfathomable, unſearchable, and incomprehenſible.

4. Chriſt is a moſt rich gift; in him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom & knowledg; *Col.* 2. 3. he is the pearl in the field, a mine of pure gold, and therefore he counſels the poor Church of *Laodicea* to buy of him tryed gold that ſhe may be rich, *Rev.* 3. 18. He is the inexhauſted fountain of all thoſe ſtreams of bleſſedneſs that flow forth all the Creation over; the eternal Spring and Well-head of all thoſe freſh Seas and Oceans, of all the ſwelling-tides and bottomleſs depths of unutterable riches of grace

grace and love to all his elect. He must needs be rich, who sets up and enriches so many thousand Bankrupts, that had not only wasted their goods, but sold themselves into slavery and bondage; he pays their ransoms, buys out their liberty, and purchases Crowns and Kingdoms for them. It would beggar all the Angels in Heaven to pay down the ransom of one soul, yea to purchase the pardon of one sin: The redemption of the soul is precious, the soul of the meanest man alive, is of more worth than a world, as he himself tells us, who went to the price of souls: What then shall we think of Christ who saves so many millions of souls? Hence in Scripture, the richest things on earth are made use of, to shadow out the riches of Christ. Under the title of wisdom, he saith, *Prov.* 8. 18, 19, *Riches and honour are with me, yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, and my revenue than choice silver.* And *Prov.* 3. 16, *Length of days are in her right hand: and in her left hand riches and honour.* Eternity hath the honour of her right hand; riches are the left-hand blessings of wisdom. The riches of Christ are not ordinary things, not perishing riches, but unsearchable and inexhaustible, *Eph.* 3. 8. There are unsearchable riches of Christ, ἀνεξιχνίαστον πλοῦτον τοῦ Χριστοῦ, not to be traced out, never to be drawn dry. Though all true believers have all their debts paid, and are all maintained and advanced by his

his riches, and at his coſt and charges; yet there is no leſſening of this treaſure, that's never the emptier: *Sumit unus, ſumunt mille, quantum iſti tantum illi, neq; ſumptus abſumitur:* One believer draws water of life, and a ſupply of all needful bleſſings out of this Well of Salvation, and a Thouſand gracious ſouls do the like, and the One draws as much as the Thouſand, yet the Well is never drawn dry. As the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks of his over-abundant grace, confeſſes he was dipt in a ſea of mercy. One *Paul* obtained as much grace, even ſo whole and compleat a ranſom without diminiſhing, as would have ſaved a world. Grace reigns, ὑπερίσσευσεν ἡ χάρις, Chriſt is rich, and Lord of all.

5. Chriſt is a moſt precious gift, *He is more precious than rubies; and all the things that thou canſt deſire are not to be compared unto him.* Imagine what you will, name what you can, and 'tis unworthy to ſtand in compariſon with Chriſt, who *is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon him; and happy is every one that retaineth him,* Prov. 3. 15, 18. It's too true, there are not a few that ſet light by Chriſt, and can ſee no beauty or comlineſs in him that they ſhould deſire him; but to them that believe he is precious, 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. The wiſe Merchant underſtood his worth, which made him ſell all that he had with joy, with a very good will; ſo far from ſticking and wavering, ſo far from changing his mind, that he perſiſts

in his reſolution with a chearful heart, that he might purchaſe this Pearl of great price, *Mat.* 13. 44. The Apoſtle *Paul* was at one with himſelf, *Yea doubtleſs, I count all things but loſs and dung, σκύβαλα, Dogs-meat, that I may win Chriſt*, Phil. 3. 8. *Let burning, hanging, all torments befall me*, tantumodo ut Chriſtum nanſciſcar, *ſo I may get Chriſt*, ſaith *Ignatius.*

Could we give you a particular view and account (but that's impoſſible) of every excellency, and all the high perfections that are in Chriſt, you would find him precious in all the parts of his Mediatorſhip, in his perſon, in his natures, in his offices, in all his gifts and graces. Look on him as Mediator, and there he ſhines forth moſt gloriouſly, and appears to be the moſt peerleſs and precious thing in the world; as Prophet, he is moſt precious. *Enoch, Noah, Moſes, Eliſha, David*, &c. were excellent and precious men in their times, but were types of Chriſt; he as far excels them, as the ſubſtance doth the ſhadow: He is Prophet, *καθ' ἐξοχὴν*, by way of eminency and exellency above all other Prophets; they ſpake to the ear, he to the heart; they ſearched out the mind of God, he came out of his boſome, and ſaith, *Counſel is mine, and ſound wiſdom, I am underſtanding*, Prov. 8. 14.

So as Prieſt he is moſt precious; this office is the moſt excellent part of his mediation; he could never have opened our eyes as Prophet, nor

nor ruled our hearts as King, had he not died for us: O, the death and blood of Christ this Lamb of God! how precious! of what infinite value! The death of a Man is more precious than of a Beast, of a King than of many Men; of Christ more than a thousand Kings. Thousands of Rams, and ten thousand Rivers of Oyl had been nothing to the price Christ paid. See in the *Hebrews* how far Christs Priesthood excels all that went before him: He alone is an everlasting Priest, offering but once, sufficient for all, gone to Heaven, *&c.* and he is Sacrifice, Priest, Temple, Altar, and all in one; μεγαλεῖα τῦ θεῦ: Never was there on earth a King so precious as Christ, though all good Kings are precious, he is over all, King of kings and Lord of lords; his kingdom spiritual over all hearts, consciences, over all nations, ages, all sorts and ranks of men, from generation to generation; he is head and King alone, without either Collegue in the largeness of his dominions, or Regent in his minority, or Vice-roy in his absence.

How precious is grace! one dram of it better than all the treasures in the world. Now he is the fountain of it, full of grace and truth; so Truths, Ordinances; so Comforts, Promises, all that belongs unto him, very precious.

6. Christ is a most pleasant gift: Nothing more desirable and amiable than Christ to sinners. Excellency is the attractive of desire,

beauty draws the eye, that affects the heart; and delight following love, makes very delightful. Now Christ is altogether lovely, *Totus ipse & in universum delectabilis & desiderabilis*, all throughout from top to toe desirable and delightful, the cheif among Ten thousand, matchless and incomparable. To say nothing of his bodily features, though Historians report Christ to be very beautiful as man: As God, he is the perfection of beauty; 'tis true, beauty is not formally in God, yet it is in him eminently and by way of Analogy; for if beauty be good, and a desirable perfection in the creature, it must needs be in the infinite God, as the perfection of the effect is in the cause. If Roses and Lillies be fair, he must be fair that created them: but in another kind, if the Sun, Moon and Stars be beautiful, the lovely Lord that made them must contain their beauty in the highest measure; beauty in God is the amiableness and lovelines of his nature, and all his infinite perfections; as this pleasantness offers it self to his own understanding, and the understanding of men and Angels. So that as bodily beauty satisfies the eye, and so acts on the heart to win love: So the Truth of the Lords nature, and all his Attributes offered to the understanding and mind, drawing from them admiration and love, is the beauty of God. The Prophet speaks of it with admiration, *How great is thy beauty!* Zech. 9. 17. *David* makes it his one thing, that

that he may behold it, *Psal.* 27. 4. *David* desires no other life, but to stand beside God, and behold with the eye of his mind and faith, God in his Nature and Attributes, as he reveals himself to the creature. Now this beauty of God shines forth to us in Christ, 2 *Cor.* 4. 7, who is the brightness of his Fathers glory, and the express character of his person, *Heb.* 1. 3. When *Moses* was to behold God, he was hid in the Rock while his glory passed by, and that Rock was Christ. You sometimes see beauty that ravishes the heart of the beholder in the children of men; O! but Christ is fairer than the Sons of men, *Psal.* 45. 2, on which place *Austin* thus descants. *To us Believers the heavenly Bridegroom seems to be most fair every way; fair in Heaven, fair on Earth, fair in the Womb, fair in the Cradle, fair in his Miracles, fair in his Doctrine, fair in his Stripes, fair on the Cross, fair in his very Grave.*

To make up a beauty is required,

1. A good complexion, fairness in colours: So Christ is pure white and red, *Cant.* 5. 10, white in his Divine Nature, which was the brightness of his Fathers substance; Red in his humanity, being of the same substance with the first *Adam*, who was made of Red Earth; White in his holiness, Red in his blood and sufferings; White in his own immaculate innocence and purity, Red by the imputation of our sins, which are like scarlet and Crimson; White in his goodness and free grace to hum-

ble ſinners, but Red and bloody in his ſeverity to his enemies that will not that he reign over them: His effigies was ſo beautiful, that no Painter could ever draw him, becauſe of that, Θείας ἀλγεης ἢ γαειτὸς, Divine luſtre and grace that ſhone in him; *His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedar*, Cant. 5. 15. and 1. 16, the Spouſe cryes out wondering, *Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea pleaſant:* that is lovely and amiable.

2. As he is fair in Coulors, ſo he is comly in proportion and integrity of parts: If a perſon have never ſo good colours, yet if any part be wanting, or be not an agreement of parts in regard of quantity, ſcituation and ſtature, 'tis no beauty, but an error of nature. But Chriſt is beautiful for features: for infiniteneſs and ſweetneſs of order and proportion is ſo ſpread over his nature and attributes, that nothing can be added to him, nothing taken from him. He is the fulneſs of the godhead, the perfection of beauty, *Cant.* 5. 10, to the end: *His head is as moſt fine gold, his locks buſhy and black as a raven, his eyes as the eyes of doves, his cheeks as a bed of ſpices, his lips like lillies, &c.* O what a pleaſant harmony, and ſpecious conſent of parts is here! *yea, he is altogether lovely*— Here ſhe breaks off her praiſes in a general Elogy, which no words can expreſs enough, *q. d.* Alas! what is this I have ſpoken! I am too barren and empty of language, I know not what to call him; but

do

do you that hear me imagine or name any thing that is moſt deſirable, moſt worthy to be loved, longed for, and admired, and that is he; he is the deſire of all Nations.

This pleaſant and delightful gift is ſet forth in Scripture by ſomething that pleaſes all the inward ſenſes. Here's beauty to delight the eye, O! how bleſſed are they who ſee the King in his beauty!

Here's Myrrh, Aloes and Caſſia, ſweet perfumes to the ſpiritual ſmell, *Pſal.* 45. 8. He is a bundle of myrrh, *Cant.* 1. 13. His voice is moſt ſweet and pleaſant to the ear, *Cant.* 2. 8. *The voice of my beloved*; ſo taken with the ſweetneſs of it that ſhe ſpeaks in broken language. *His lips like lillies dropping ſweet ſmelling myrrh*, Cant. 5. 13. *How ſweet is he to the taſte*, Cant. 2. 3! *I ſate down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte*; of an excellent relliſh; wine, milk, honey, fatted calf, *&c.* are but ſhadows of this. He's a delicate Banquet. The kiſſes of his mouth and hidden manna are moſt delectable to the ſpiritual touch, *Cant.* 1. 2. The ſenſe and experience of his mercy, the aſſurance of his love, the ſealing of his Spirit, O how ſweet to a thirſty ſoul! O taſte and ſee that the Lord is gracious and tranſcendently amiable and pleaſant: as Mr. *Rutherford.* Suppoſe all the corns of ſand in all the earth and ſhores, all the flowers, herbs, leaves, and twigs of trees ſince the creation, all the drops of dew and rain that

the clouds ſend down, all the ſtars in heaven, all the joints, hairs, and drops of blood of all men that have been, are or ſhall be, were all rational creatures, and had the wiſdom and tongues of Angels to ſpeak of the beauty and lovelineſs of Chriſt, they would in all their expreſſions ſtay millions of miles on this ſide Chriſt and his excellency.

7. Chriſt is a moſt uſeful gift. In this reſpect he is the one thing needful; and were there no other excellency in him, this were enough to commend him to us, he is ſo uſeful that we cannot be without him. Though a gift were never ſo rich, pleaſant, and precious in it ſelf, yet if the excellency in it may not be made uſe of, and it be not good and fit for us, it is not much valued. But this gift of God is ſo admirable good for our uſe, that he ſeems to be fitted and dreſſed, and made all for our uſe; in regard of his Mediatorſhip, that office is wholly for us and our benefit. He was born, lived, died, roſe again, ſits on Gods right hand as Advocate, and comes to judgment for our ſakes and for our good. He is God and Man, Prophet, Prieſt, and King. A Saviour, a Redeemer, a Surety, an Advocate, a Mediator, Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, *&c.* all for uſe to us loſt and periſhing ſinners. He is a jewel indeed, but not locked up in heaven to be made uſe of by none. Chriſt is ſhadowed forth in Scripture by Head, Vine, Milk, Water, *&c.* now what more neceſſary

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and uſeful to men than theſe? Who could reconcile us to God when we were enemies, but Chriſt in his blood? *Rom.* 5. 10. Who could juſtifie us in the ſight of God, when we were ſinners, but Chriſt by his righteouſneſs? *Rom.* 3. 26. Who could repair the Image of God in us, and reſtore the life of Grace when we were dead, but Chriſt by his Spirit? How could we ever put off the old man, and put on the new, die to ſin, and live unto God, were it not for Chriſts death and reſurrection? Had not he ſanctified himſelf for our ſakes, we had never been holy; had he not born the puniſhment we deſerved, we had never been happy: was not he given, that whoſoever believed on him might not periſh, but have everlaſting life?

Tell me, you that think Chriſt is a perſon that may be well ſpared, *&c.* who could ever have opened the eyes of the blind, the ears of the deaf, or healed a wounded ſpirit? Who could have bound up a broken heart, opened the Priſon-dores, broken off the chains of bondage, and proclaimed liberty to the captives? Who could have ſatisfied infinite juſtice, born the weight of Gods Wrath, removed the curſe of the Law, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs? certainly none but Chriſt.

8. Chriſt is a moſt gainful gift. He is abſolute and univerſal gain; Chriſt is the moſt profitable gift to the ſoul that can be injoyed, yea that can be imagined; nothing more commo-

modious, nothing more enriching than Chriſt is to them that have him. There is no man rich without Chriſt, neither is there any poor that have him; a man without Chriſt is a beggarly bankrupt; but one that hath Chriſt is a wealthy King: He that hath Chriſt, hath all; he that hath not him, hath nothing. Chriſt is not gain as worldly things are profitable in relation to their ends, as wealth is good to ſupply want, food to maintain life, clothes to keep off cold air, a bed to reſt weary limbs; but Chriſt is a rich and ineſtimable treaſure to the ſoul, without reference to any further end than himſelf; he is to be deſired even for himſelf, his merchandiſe is better than ſilver, and his gain than fine gold, *Prov.* 3. 14. Man knows not the price of wiſdom, of this wiſdom, *Prov.* 8. 18. It cannot be valued with the gold of *Ophir*, with the precious *Onyx* and *Saphire*; there is no talking nor bidding in this Market, ſo precious is this corner-ſtone. *No mention ſhall be made of corral, or of pearls, for the price of wiſdom is above rubies: The topaz of Ethiopia ſhall not equal it, neither ſhall it be valued with pure gold*, &c. Job 28. 18, 19. What the Apoſtle ſaith of godlineſs, is very true of Chriſt, he is profitable for all things, and he is gainful at all times, and to all perſons, both for ſoul and body, for the life that now is, and the life that is to come, and for ever. The ſalvation of the ſoul, is better than the gaining of a whole world; *What is a man*

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profited if he gain the world and loſe his ſoul? How much more gain then is he by whom a world of ſouls are ſaved!

9. Chriſt is a moſt ſuitable gift. He ſuits all perſons, and all conditions, whether a man be poor or rich, young or old, noble or ignoble, learned or unlearned, bond or free, high or low; the richeſt have need of him, as well as the pooreſt, and the meaneſt may have him as well as the greateſt; be in what condition or relation ſoever, he is ſuitable to all. And O! how ſuitable is Chriſt to the loſt condition of all men by nature! man is an enemy to God, Chriſt is the Peace-maker; he is a Captive, Chriſt is a Redeemer; he is loſt, Chriſt a Saviour; he is ſick, Chriſt a Phyſician; he is dead, Chriſt gives life; he is poor, Chriſt gives riches; he is weak, Chriſt is ſtrength; he is guilty, Chriſt hath righteouſneſs; he is filthy, Chriſt hath blood to waſh him in; he is naked, Chriſt hath a Garment to cloath him; he is hungry, Chriſt is the Bread of Life; he is thirſty, Chriſt gives living waters. O! how ſuitable, how acceptable is Chriſt to poor ſinners! He that hath Chriſt may ſay, here's ſtrength to ſupport me, Wiſdom to direct me, Power to protect me, Gold to inrich me, Cordial to comfort me, and Fulneſs to ſupply all my wants: He is made all things to all men, eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, and a Father to the poor. Chriſt is for every turn, and fitted for every con-

condition; be it what it will or can, he hath a ſufficiency relative and ſuitable to it; there's no diſeaſe but this Phyſician can cure it; no Caſe but this Counſellor can reſolve it; no Enemy but this Champion can conquer; no difficulty but this mighty Saviour can overcome.

10. Chriſt is a moſt ſeaſonable gift. Every thing is beautiful in its ſeaſon: all other things have their ſeveral ſeaſons; as food is good, but 'tis when a man is hungry; ſo cloaths when a man is naked, Phyſick when a man is not well; Muſick when a man is merry: now Chriſt is never out of ſeaſon. A gift-beſtowed in the nick of time is moſt valued; *Bis dat, qui cito dat*, 'tis a double favour when done in time: the right timing of things, is a high point of practical wiſdom, and puts a beauty and value upon all things. Now conſidering the ſtate of man (as lapſed) Chriſt was the moſt ſeaſonable gift that ever the world heard of. This is ſet forth in the Parable, *Luk.* 10. 30, *A certain man went down from Jeruſalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which ſtripped him, wounded him, and left him half dead, &c.* The man that travelled was our firſt Parent *Adam*, the Thieves were the Divels, who deprived him of all, wounded him, and left him not half, but wholly dead: the Prieſt and Levite came by and looked on, but paſſed away, neither would nor could help him; but the good *Samaritan* (ſo eſteemed by the *Jews*) Chriſt

Chriſt he comes, had compaſſion on him, went to him, bound up his wounds with his own ſoft hands, poured in Wine and Oyl, and brought him to an Inn, and took care for him that he ſhould want nothing towards his recovery; takes the whole charge of it to himſelf. What can be imagined more ſeaſonable, than for ſuch a compaſſionate Phyſitian to come by, look on and undertake when a man lyes bleeding and dying in the high way? *Ezekiel* 16, beginning, doth excellently expreſs the ſeaſonableneſs of his coming to us; Chriſt is ſent to us, when we are at an utter loſs, can neither help our ſelves, nor all the world do us any good, give the leaſt relief: When he comes into the world, it is ſaid, *Heb.* 10. 5. *Sacrifice and offering thou wouldeſt not, In burnt offerings and ſacrifices for ſin thou hadſt no pleaſure:* all the world was at a loſs to pleaſe God; What ſhall man do, and whither will he fly for help? *Then, even then, ſaid I, lo I come (in the volume of thy book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.* Chriſt comes in the very nick of time, when all mankind was ready to periſh, that goodly tribe of the Creation was almoſt utterly loſt; *I looked and there was none to help, then my own arm brought ſalvation,* Iſa. 63. 5. The year of my Redeemed is come, now is the accepted time, now is the day of ſalvation: So when a poor convinced ſinner is at a loſs, and knows not what to do, crys, I am cut off for my part, my hope and my ſtrength

ſtrength is periſhed,*&c.* even deſpairs of help from all other, then comes Chriſt, then ariſeth the Sun of Righteouſneſs with healing in his wings; in the thickeſt darkneſs day breaks forth; when the Bricks are doubled, then comes *Moſes: In the mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen.*

11. Chriſt is a moſt ſatisfying gift. He that creates the heart, can fill and ſatisfie it: in worldly things the more a man enjoys, the more he deſires. If God heap temporal gifts on men till there be no room for more, give them never ſo many left-hand bleſſings, ſtill mans heart is like the grave, that never ſaith it is enough; or the daughters of the Horſleech unſatisfiedly crying, Give, give. But there is this excellency in this gift, that he that hath received it, hath enough; and no wonder, for he hath all. *Eſau* ſaith, *I have enough, my Brother*; and *Jacob* ſaid, *I have enough*, Gen. 33. 9, 11. Interpreters obſerve, that word which *Eſau* uſeth (tranſlated *enough*, ſignifies *much*) and the word for *Jacob*'s *enough*, ſignifies *all*. *Eſau* had much, but *Jacob* had all. And the reaſon he renders is, becauſe God hath dealt graciouſly with me, *Habet omnia qui habet habentem omnia*, in Chriſt is a full ſtore-houſe, and well-ſpring of comforts to make up whatever defects are in other things. The Sun can make day without the Stars; ſuch as have Chriſt can ſay (as 2 *Cor.* 6. 10.) *We are, as poor, yet rich; as having nothing,*

thing, yet poſſeſſing all things: in reſpect of the world we are poor and contemptible; but in reſpect of our incomes, and havings in Chriſt, we are rich and honourable, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. *All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollo, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, things preſent and things to come, all are yours, for Chriſt is yours, and ye are Chriſts.* O this ſweetens every relation, this ſuffices in every condition, *Joh.* 4. 14. *Whoſoever drinks of the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt*; which muſt not be underſtood of feeling the neceſſity; but of falling into the intire privation of Gods grace; not as ſpoken againſt deſire, but againſt drineſs; or rather it's excluſive (not of deſires after more of Chriſt, but) of all inordinate deſires after all other things: As *Bernard* ſays, *Nihil ita temperat ſitim avaritiæ, ſicut nomen Jeſu*; nothing quenches the thirſt of covetouſneſs, ambition, *&c.* but the name of Jeſus; *ſuperbiæ tumprem ſedat*; *nihil ita libidinis flammam extinguit*, Iſa. 49. 10. *They ſhall not hunger nor thirſt; for he that hath mercy on them, ſhall lead them: even by the ſprings of water ſhall he guide them.* Pſal. 36. 8, *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy houſe; and thou ſhalt make them drink of the rivers of thy pleaſures, for with thee is the fountain of life, in thy light ſhall we ſee light.* He that hath Chriſt, that can ſay, *my beloved is mine, and I am his*, may contentedly want all other comforts; he hath enough

enough beſides. He hath that ἀφθονίαν, that abundant plenty, which obſerved, will not ſuffer him to envy the moſt proſperous ſinner: he may anſwer Satan when he offers worldly glory and preferments, as that woman did the Prophet, *I live among mine own people, I have enough. The Lord is my ſhepherd, I ſhall not want; the Lord is my portion, and I will reſt in him.* He can look on earthly Paradiſes with a diſdainful eye and ſcornful countenance, and trample under foot with a holy contempt, all ſublunary fading vanities. Chriſt in his eye, his glorious excellency, raviſhing beauty, and inexplicable delightfulneſs, doth infinitely tranſcend the utmoſt height of all earthly felicities, and it laſteth for ever.

12. Chriſt is a moſt laſting gift; yea, he is everlaſting. This is the flower, top and bound of all the forementioned Excellencies, without which they would be ſcattered and loſt. He is a moſt free, full and kind gift; a moſt rich, precious, and lovely gift; moſt neceſſary, uſeful and gainful gift; moſt ſuitable, ſeaſonable, and ſatisfying. Add this one more, and it compleats all, He is unchangeable, the ſame for ever.

They that once have him, ſhall never loſe him; none ſhall ever be able to pluck them out of his hands, nor him out of their hearts; the union and propriety is inſeparable, and inſuperable; other things (like flowers) decay and wither in our hands, and the excellency that

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is in them goes away, but Chriſt is always freſh and precious, and always ours. 'Twas a juſt complaint that was made long ago againſt the Heathen gods, *O faciles dare ſumma deos, eademq; tueri difficiles*; they could give their favourites great gifts, but they could not maintain them in the poſſeſſion of them. So 'tis not with our God; his gifts and gratuities are ἀμεταμέλητα, without repentance; and in this reſpect Believers are in a better ſtate now than *Adam* in innocency, he had excellent gifts of knowledg, grace, and inherent righteouſneſs, but was not confirmed in them, but being left to the mutability of his own will, choſe the evil, refuſed and loſt the good, and fell from his own happineſs: But now Chriſt is confirmed upon them that believe in him; he ſhall loſe none that are given to him, nor ſhall they loſe him to whom he is given; once theirs, and for ever theirs; while he keeps them, they ſhall keep him; and while they are his, he is theirs, that is ſo long as God is God, for ever and ever.

Uſe. This Doctrine (*Chriſt is Gods gift*) if fully improved in Application, would afford many excellent Uſes, but I ſhall (for brevities ſake) compriſe all in one.

An Uſe of Inſtruction or Exhortation, *Is Chriſt the gift of God?* it may ſerve to inſtruct and exhort us:

1. To receive.
2. To keep this gift.
3. Make uſe of it.
4. Be thankful for.
5. Be faithful in him, walk worthy of him.

1. Let us be perſwaded to receive and embrace this tranſcendently excellent gift. O that we may be enticed and allured by what hath been ſaid of the incomparable worth of this gift of God, to a hearty reception and particular application of it to our ſelves; we can hardly ſee an excellent perſon, but we are wiſhing him for our friend and companion; nor hear of a precious Jewel, or fair eſtate, but we are ſecretly coveting it were ours; and can we hear of him who is Excellency it ſelf, originally, the ſpring and ſtandard of all excellency in others, whoſe name alone is excellent, and not wiſh, O that it were mine? O that this bleſſed Chriſt were my friend, my father, my head, my husband, my lot, my portion? Who will give me to drink of this Well of water ſpringing up to eternal life; this fountain of living waters, this pure river that flows from the Throne, from the heart of God. Canſt thou hear ſo much (though infinitely ſhort) of his worth, and not deſire him? Doſt thou indeed believe that all this is true, and yet thy ſoul not hunger and thirſt after him? Are theſe faithful ſayings, and is

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not he worthy of all acceptation? Is it possible for a rational creature to hear of such a bottomless treasure, of such a boundless pleasure, and not covet the enjoyment of it? O man! where are thy wits? What's become of thy reason? Art thou a man or a bruit? If thou knewest the gift of God, and what it is that is offered thee, thou wouldest scorn the highest honours, the sweetest pleasures, the greatest riches, yea trample upon all the Crowns and Kingdoms of this world for it. It's an inestimable priviledg that thou art a creature capable of so vast a happiness; it's the astonishing wonder of Heaven and Earth, that God would give a Son, such a Son to be thy Saviour! what could he give more or better? and it's a special favour that the Gospel hath been sent to thee, to reveal this great mystery, to offer this excellent gift to thee; and now when it is tendered, wilt thou refuse it? Wilt thou neglect and undervalue Christ? or wilt thou not rather give it all humble and thankful acceptance? Reflect upon those twelve incomparable properties and characters of this gift, methinks though I have spoken but little, yet I have said enough to one that will let his reason judg, to draw out thy most vehement desires after this gift. Yet I will add these Considerations more.

1. Consider who it is that offers this gift to thee. Christ is the gift of God, in a pe-

culiar and eminent manner ſo; therefore were there no other reaſon, thou muſt take it.

The worth, greatneſs and excellency of the Donor, is an argument to move us to take the gift; we regard not ſo much what it is, as from whom it is: If thy Father or thy Prince offer a gift to thee, would'ſt thou, durſt thou deny it? If thy deareſt Friend ſhould ſend thee a token, wouldeſt thou ſlight it? Now look on the beſt of men, in all his Excellencies in himſelf, relations to thee, and thy dependance on him; conſider in him all that faithfulneſs, goodneſs, greatneſs, or any thing elſe that would moſt move thee to take a gift from his hands; and there is infinitely more cauſe to accept this gift at the hands of God. The great and glorious God, the King of kings, Lord of lords, and God of gods, the bleſſed Majeſty of Heaven, the firſt Cauſe, the original Being, ſelf-ſufficient, all-ſufficient, abſolutely, perfect, uncapable of any addition, or diminution, humbles himſelf to offer this gift to thee. 'Tis the high and lofty One that inhabits Eternity, to whom millions of ages are but as one day; who is boundleſs in his Being, Omnipotent in his Power, unſearchable in his Wiſdom, unconceivable in his Grace, and infinite in all his Perfections. He who dwells in that light inacceſſible, before whom the Angels the higheſt of Creatures vail their faces; to whom the whole Creation is nothing, leſs than nothing, and vanity. This God is he that made

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thee and all things of nothing; ſupports all things, influences all things, and is all things, and infinitely more than all things. He is the God in whoſe hands thy life is, and who is acquainted with all thy ways; who is of infinite holineſs, and perfectly hates all wickedneſs; of unlimited power, able to avenge himſelf on thee every moment, and turn thy ſoul and body into Hell. Of infinite juſtice, a jealous God, who will by no means clear the guilty; againſt whom thou haſt ſinned and been an offence and provocation to him all thy days, and is thine enemy according to ſtrict juſtice; 'tis he whoſe favour is life, and whoſe frown is death and hell, *&c.*

The height of a perſon that beſtows a favour, and the meanneſs and unworthineſs of the object on whom it is beſtowed, as it doth exceedingly advance and heighten the Grace and goodneſs of him that doth it; ſo it mightily aggravates the ſin and danger of him that deſpiſeth and refuſeth it. *See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh from heaven, for if they eſcaped not, &c.* Heb. 12. 25.

O what infinite grace and goodneſs is it for this great God to take ſo much notice of man, and do ſo much for him! What admirable, wonderful condeſcenſion is it, for the moſt High, the God of Heaven and Earth, that God whom the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain, to manifeſt ſuch reſpect to vile polluted duſt and aſhes, yea to them that are

rebels and traytors againſt his Majeſty, and thereby worthy of hell, as once to offer his bleſſed only begotten Son to us as a Saviour: Well may we with *David* be amazed at it, and cry with admiration, *Pſal.* 8. 14. *O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, who haſt ſet thy glory above the heavens.* And adds, *What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him?* That ſo glorious a Lord ſhould mind poor, ſilly, weak, frail, dying man, ſinful, filthy, polluted, wretched, miſerable man, could not but affect his heart with admiration and aſtoniſhment! If a friend or neighbour, thy equal, do offer thee a kindneſs (though but ſmall) how ill does he take it, if thou accept it not! O what horrid indignity doſt thou offer to God, what diſhonour is it to all his Attributes if thou refuſe this tranſcendent gift!

2. Conſider what it is that is offered to thee, when this gift of God Jeſus Chriſt is offered to thee. To explain this fully would require the tongue, nay exceed the skill of an Angel; none can tell what Chriſt is, but Chriſt himſelf; all thoſe particulars I mentioned, ſpeak ſomewhat of him, but not the thouſand thouſandth part of that excellency that is in him. This let me tell thee, when Chriſt is offered to thee, the greateſt good that ever was, that ever will be, that ever can be, is offered thee. There never was, nor can be

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the like offered thee; 'tis the beſt giſt that ever was received or given in the world; more than Heaven and Earth, more than the whole world, more than millions of worlds is offered thee. He who is offered to thee, is the Well of Salvation, the Lord of Life, the Author of all Conſolation; an Hive of ſweetneſs, a Paradiſe of pleaſure, an Heaven of joy. He is the richeſt grace, the deareſt love, the ſureſt friend, the higheſt honour, the vaſteſt treaſure, the exacteſt beauty, the chiefeſt good, the fulleſt felicity. He is a comprehenſive and univerſal good, not one but all good, riches, honours, pleaſures, friends, relations, health, life, earth, heaven, the world, the other world, all the good of both worlds, and infinitely more. He is ſo needful a good, that thou art undone without him; that's the miſery of hell, yea the very hell of hell. He is ſo plentiful a good, that thou art perfectly happy in him, thou needeſt no more; he is the Heaven of heavens; he is the only ſuitable ſatisfying good, which ſuits the nature and fits and fills the deſires of the rational creature; he can enlarge and ſuit all thy faculties, anſwer and relieve all thy neceſſities, fill up all the capacities of thy heaven-born ſoul. He is an everlaſting good, who will ſtay with thee, and ſtand by thee, when all other good things ſhall fail thee. Wilt thou not now ſay, *Lord whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I deſire in compari-*

ſon of thee? I'm ſure he is ſuch a gift as thou wouldeſt have if thou knew what thou doſt; as thou ſhouldſt have if thou underſtood thy ſelf, and anſweredſt the ends of the Goſpel; as thou muſt have, if thou be not eternally miſerable. O what doſt thou think of having this gift as thine own? ſure by this time, thy heart may melt into aſtoniſhment, and thy bowels be moved within thee; and thy ſoul cry with the Martyr in the flames, *None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt:* Well, what ſaiſt thou to him? is not Chriſt worthy to be accepted and embraced? Is it not worth the while to have him for thine own? Whatever thou thinkeſt now, when death ſhall cloſe thy eyes, thou wilt be of this mind when thy ſoul ſtands quivering on thy lips, ready to take its flight into the unknown regions of the other world; when Devils will be waiting to ſeize upon it, (as ſoon as ever it leaves the body) to hale it to the unquenchable flames of Hell; when thy friends, relations, ſhall be weeping and wailing by thee, but unable to afford thy dying body the leaſt cordial, or thy departing ſoul the leaſt comfort: Ah, what wilt thou do in ſuch an hour which is haſting on thee! Without Chriſt, on whom wilt thou call, to whom wilt thou flee? where wilt thou reſt or hide thy ſelf from the wrath of the Lamb of God? Believe it, though thou maiſt live without him, thou canſt not die without him, without infinite horrour and

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confuſion. Is it not thy greateſt concern to have him for thine, to whom thou muſt ſtand or fall for ever? from whoſe mouth thy ſentence of eternal abſolution or condemnation muſt come? and who ſhall judg thee to thine unchangeable ſtate of life or death, of ſalvation or damnation; though thou maiſt think thou canſt do well enough without him at this day, having what heart can wiſh in the world, yet what wilt thou do at that day when the world ſhall be on a flame, if Chriſt be not thine?

Once more; let me intreat thee to anſwer, Art thou willing or not to have this gift? What ſay'ſt thou, canſt thou find in thine heart to deprive thy precious ſoul of ſuch an ineſtimable treaſure, and to leave it naked in the other world, to the cruelty of Devils, and the dreadful curſes of the Law, and intolerable wrath of God?

3. Conſider on what terms thou maiſt have this gift for thine; thou maiſt poſſibly think that ſo boundleſs and bottomleſs a treaſure muſt coſt thee very dear, and the price muſt be exceeding great of a pearl ſo matchleſs and incomparable; much will be expected from me, and I ſhall never be able to compaſs this gift. But know (ſinner) to thy comfort, all that God requireth of thee, is only to accept Chriſt heartily and thankfully; canſt thou deſire any thing cheaper? wouldeſt thou deſire

deſire him, to fall lower in his terms? Nay, is it poſſible to do ſo, and make thee happy? How can he be thine, unleſs thou receive him for thine? that is a poor favour, a vile gift, that is not worth acceptance; what more reaſonable, take him for thine, and he ſhall be thine? canſt thou both deny him and enjoy him? refuſe the gift, and have it too? Our emptineſs is the beſt plea, and ſelf-denial our beſt price; thou giveſt more for thy bread, thy clothes, thy houſe, and for the needful comforts that are for the ſupport of thy frail body, than thou needeſt to give for this great and glorious Chriſt; thou payeſt money for them, but thou maiſt have him without money, and without price. One would think that the equity of the condition ſhould both amaze thee and allure thee; God doth not ſell, but give his Son; he knows thou haſt nothing, and he would only have thee to know that too, and be humbled under the ſenſe of thy ſpiritual poverty; thou maiſt loſe a gift by offering to buy it, *Thy money periſh with thee*, &c. 'Tis ſaid indeed, *Iſa.* 55. 1. *Come buy, &c.* for the word is uſed here improperly, for to get, attain, receive, procure, furniſh your ſelves, *&c.* So *Prov.* 3. 8. and elſewhere; ſomething muſt indeed be done by thoſe that partake of Chriſt, they muſt come and accept of him. And ſomething parted with, but of no valuable conſideration in gain to God; and what would be prejudicial to us and inconſiſtent with having

ving this gift. But God requires not of thee things impoſſible; he doth not ſay, If thou wilt remove mountains, dry up oceans, ſtop the courſe of nature, create worlds, and Chriſt ſhall be thine; as great, as good as he is, he doth not ſay, If thou ſatisfie my juſtice, anſwer the demands of my Law, merit my love and favour, then ſhall he be thine: No, he himſelf hath done all this for thee; all that he deſires is, that thou wouldeſt receive him that hath done ſo.

Neither doth he require any thing of thee that is barbarous and cruel, as the Heathen Deities did of their worſhippers; he ſays not, if thou wilt lance and mangle thy body as *Baal*'s Prieſts did; or if thou wilt go barefoot in ſackcloth long and tedious Pilgrimages as the *Papiſts* do: If you will offer your Children in the fire, and give the fruit of your bodies for the ſin of your ſouls, as ſome did; then he is yours. Nor doth he require of thee chargeable and coſtly, as to offer the beſt and chiefeſt of thy flock in ſacrifice to him; nor as he once did of the young man, to ſell all that thou haſt and give it to the poor: Nor as Idolaters, lay down ſuch a part of thy eſtate for thy pardon. But he only requires that thou firſt thirſt, and then buy; be ſenſible of thy want, and poverty, and nothingneſs, and then open an empty hand and take Chriſt as thy Saviour and Lord; and wilt thou not do it? Canſt thou deny him and thy poor

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ſoul ſo reaſonable, ſo equitable a requeſt? as the Servant ſaid to *Naaman*, *If the prophet had commanded thee ſome great thing, wouldeſt thou not have done it? how much more then, when he only ſaith, waſh and be clean?* So ſay I to thee, If God had commanded the greateſt things imaginable, wouldeſt thou not to thy power have done them, that thou maiſt injoy the bleſſed Son of God for thine? How much more then, when he only ſaith, Take Jeſus Chriſt as thy Lord and Saviour, prize and love him as thy Saviour, obey and honour him as thy Lord, and he ſhall be thine for ever? do but as much for him, as the covetous man does for his wealth, as the ambitious man for his honour, as the voluptuous man for his belly; they give their higheſt eſteem, their choiceſt affections, and their greateſt ſervice, to that which they take for their God, their chief good: And ſurely Chriſt is more worthy hereof, and will requite thee beſt for them.

4. Conſider how God offers this gift to thee; his manner of dealing with thee in this is wonderful; he offers Chriſt moſt really, means what he ſpeaks, and moſt tenderly and affectionately: He not only offers Chriſt to thee, but invites thee to him; what canſt thou deſire more in a gift or benefit, than to have it heartily offered, and be invited to take it? He offers Chriſt without grudging, falſhood, or

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equivocation; with an open heart, that he may ſhew how willing and cordial he is to part with this gift. He invites us to take him, *Rev.* 22. 17, *Let him that is a thirſt come, and whoſoever will let him take the water of life freely:* Nay, he ſhouts and calls aloud, *Iſa.* 55. 1, *Ho every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea come buy wine and milk, without money, and without price.* Had he once tendered Chriſt, it had been infinite mercy; but to entreat us to accept him, to perſwade and move us, as one that would not be denied, that's admirable. 2 Cor. 5. 20, *We are embaſſadors for Chriſt; as though God did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſts ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.* And he commands us to receive Chriſt his Son, and makes this the chief, and (as it were) the only thing he requires of us, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23; and inforceth his juſt command with moſt ſevere threatnings, *Heb.* 12. 25, *See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh; for if they eſcaped not who refuſed him that ſpake on earth, much more ſhall not we eſcape, if we turn away from him that ſpeaketh from heaven.* Sometimes he expoſtulateth with men, *Wherefore do you ſpend your money for that which is not bread? Iſa.* 55. 2, and adds proteſtations of his loathneſs that any ſoul ſhould periſh, *Why will you dye? anger is not in me: why ſhould the flame conſume the ſtubble? what could I do more? what iniquity have ye found in me, &c?*

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He complains and laments moſt ſadly, when men neglect and ſlight this offered gift, *Why will ye not come to me, that ye may have life? He came to his own and they received him not*, John 1. 11. *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, thou that killeſt the Prophets, and ſtoneſt them that are ſent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Matt.* 23. 37. Yea, with very vehement paſſions he bewails and weeps over them that pity not themſelves, *Luke* 19. 42, *If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, &c.* Thoſe tears and mournings over *Jeruſalem* for her hard heart and contempt, have been, and are ſtill over thee. He upbraids men with nothing ſo much as this, and threatens no ſuch woes in all the Scripture, as againſt ſuch as refuſe Chriſt, *Matt.* 11. 20, *Wo unto thee Chorazin, wo unto thee Bethſaida, &c.* Jer. 13. 17, *Wo unto thee, O Jeruſalem, wilt thou not be made clean? when ſhall it once be?* He is never ſo angry with any, as with them that deſpiſe this love, and refuſe this offer, *Luke* 14. 21. *Matt.* 22. 7. He was very wroth when the invited gueſts would not come. So *Mat.* 21. 40, with thoſe Husbandmen that took his Son and killed him; and thoſe Citizens (*Luke* 19. 27.) that would not have him reign over them, are deſtroyed as enemies. And when all this will do no good, men will not be perſwaded

swaded nor allured, but hang off and keep at a distance; he goes away (as it were troubled) and wishing it had been better. He swears and pawns his life on it, that he would not have them perish, has no pleasure in their destruction, *Ezek.* 33. 11. *O that they had hearkened to my commandments, then had their peace been as a river, and their righteousness as the waves of the sea.* Isa. 48. 18. Psal. 81. 11. *But my people would not hearken to my voice, Israel would none of me. O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways, I would soon have subdued their enemies, I would have fed them with the finest of the wheat, with honey out of the rock would I have satisfied them.* O the compassionate pangs of Gods bowels of infinite mercy towards poor sinners! *O quam stupenda pieatas! quam mira Dei dignatio! quem rogare debuimus, ut nos recipere dignaretur: ab ipso rogamur, ut ad eum venire dignemur.*

It were (one would think) enough to prevail with us to accept this gift with joy and thankfulness to consider how incomparably excellent the gift it self is.—But God adds unspeakable benefits with him to draw us to this acceptance; as life and favour with God, *Prov.* 8. 35. *Whoso findeth me, findeth life, and obtaineth favour of the Lord.* Recovery of Gods image, freedom from bondage, communion with God, liberty of will, pardon of sin, power against sin, deliverance from Satan, peace and

and joy, adoption of Sons, *Joh.* 1. 12. acceptance of perſons and ſervices, audience of prayers, a ſanctified uſe of comforts and croſſes, victory over death, aſſurance of heaven, the fair inheritance of all things, fulneſs of joy and happineſs, pleaſures for evermore.

5. Conſider, why God offereth Chriſt unto thee; for what end is he thus ſollicitous about thine acceptance of this gift; do not miſtake me, nor deceive thy ſelf by thinking that becauſe God out of his infinite pity to his miſerable creatures, is inſtant and urgent with them to accept of Chriſt, therefore he hath any need of thee, or ſeeketh his own happineſs therein. I tell thee, if thou hadſt no more need of Chriſt than he hath of thee, thou maiſt let him alone. No, it's purely for thy good, for thy real and eternal good that he offers his Son to thee. He needs thy ſervice no more than he doth the ſervice of the Damned, or of the Devils; and he knows how to make uſe of thee for his own glory as he doth of them, if thou fooliſhly reject this offer of his Son to ſave thee. Had he a work to do, he needs not thy help; he might have made nobler creatures than the preſent race of mankind to glorifie his Grace, and execute his will, and have left thee and all *Adam*'s poſterity to glorifie his Juſtice. *Thy righteouſneſs will not help him,* Job 22. 2, 3. *Nor thy wickedneſs hurt him,* Job 35. 2. He expects

expects no gain by thee, looks for no requital; he offers this gift to thee, not that he may be bleſſed by thee, but that he may be bountiful to thee; it's thy good, not his own that he looks at: The felicity of accepting is thine own, and the miſery of neglecting is thine own. *Prov* 9 12, *If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for thy ſelf; but if thou ſcornſt, thou alone ſhalt bear it.* Men call Cuſtomers to them, and preſs them with many arguments and entreaties to buy, that they may inrich themſelves by their Cuſtomers; but God calls men to buy of him, not to inrich himſelf (he is as rich, and perfect, and happy as he can be) but to inrich themſelves. *I counſel thee* (ſaith Chriſt to his lukewarm Church) *Rev.* 3. 18, *to buy of me gold tryed in the fire* (Why? that he might get ſomething by him and enrich himſelf? No) that thou maiſt be rich, that *thou*, not *I* may be rich. Now Brethren ponder it ſeriouſly, it is wholly for your own good, that you may eſcape wrath and death, that you may attain Heaven and life, that God is pleaſed once more to offer Chriſt to you. He gives his Son to this end, that you may be ſaved, to bring you into the ſtate of Sons, and into a right to Heaven and Glory. Had he given Chriſt only to rule over you with his Scepter of righteouſneſs, it would have been an excellent gift, and no ſmall priviledg to be Subjects to ſuch a Prince, eſpecially for ſuch as were bondſlaves of Satan by na-

ture; but he gives Chriſt to ſave and redeem us. Something, yea very much of God is in the Creation, much of God in his common providence; but moſt of all, yea whole God in the redemption of man. If a Phyſitian ſhould come to us who would heal us of all our diſeaſes (ſuppoſe we were an Hoſpital of unſound perſons) would he not be moſt acceptable to us? What more acceptable to a poor man than wealth? or a naked man than clothes? or to an hungry man than bread? a ſlave than freedom? all this and infinitely more is Chriſt to us. Now all that is required of us in order to the obtaining of all theſe benefits, is to believe in Chriſt; and what is believing, but receiving Chriſt, as he is offered to us in the Goſpel? *John* 1. 12. What is thy mind now about this offer? what doſt thou reſolve on? wilt thou have Chriſt this Gift of God, or not? Is there any thing unreaſonable in his demands? any thing defective in this offer, or in the gift? is not Chriſt fair, or good enough? is he not rich and honourable enough? is there any want of love or lovelineſs in Chriſt for thee? What hath been ſaid of him, will ſilence all theſe and the like objections. What canſt thou ſay? is it an indifferent matter whether thou take this or not? doth not thy eternal felicity depend on thine acceptance of him? what ſayeſt thou? ſhall Chriſt be thy Lord, or the Devil? One of theſe will reign over thee. Conſider what thou doſt, thy Soul is immortal,

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and muſt either take God, and Chriſt, and Heaven to be thy portion for ever; or Hell, and Death, and Wrath, and Divels for thy portion for ever: one of theſe two is the portion of all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam*. If thou wilt ſtill prefer the world before Chriſt, and love the creature above Chriſt, and pleaſe thy fleſh more than Chriſt, then thou goeſt without him; and however thou maiſt ſhift in this world, yet when once thou appeareſt in another world, God will rain fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt, and this will be the portion of thy cup, *Pſal.* 11 6. But if now thou accepteſt of this gift of God, Jeſus Chriſt, when all thy friends ſhall leave thee, and deareſt relations forſake thee, yea, when thy fleſh and thy heart ſhall fail thee, Chriſt will be the ſtrength of thy heart, and thy portion for ever. Well, conſider what I ſay, and the Lord give thee underſtanding, that thou maiſt know when thou art well offered, and be wiſe on this ſide the other world.

I know not what other anſwer you can rationally make to all that hath been ſaid, to perſwade your acceptance of this gift of God, but that either you have it already, or deſire to know how you may make it your own; I ſhall therefore, to prevent miſtakes in the one, and to give aſſiſtance to the other, firſt direct you to try your ſelves, whether Chriſt be yours or not, and then how to attain propriety in this excellent gift, whereby

you may be happy to all eternity.

Let this be your moſt ſerious inquiry, whether you have indeed received this gift of God or not. Is Chriſt yours? can you truly ſay with the Spouſe (*Cant.* 2. 16.) *My beloved is mine, and I am his?* If you can but once ſay, and ſpeak true, *I am my beloveds* (as *Cant.* 6. 3) you may with the ſame breath conclude, *my beloved is mine.* Have you ever made a full, intire, affectionate, deliberate and unreſerved reſignation of your ſelves unto him? have you given up your heart, head and hands, all you are, all you have, unto Jeſus Chriſt, and that conſtantly? Then he is wholly yours. For God never gave his Son to any, but ſuch gave themſelves to the Lord, and are new creatures, and ſound believers. But more particularly:

1. If you have received this gift of God, you do very highly eſteem of him, and prefer him above all other things in the world. To them that believe, Chriſt is precious, they have a good opinion of his worth and excellency, have him in greateſt honour and eſtimation, as *Hinſius* ſaith the word τιμὴ ſignifies. He that loves Father or Mother, or any Relation, or Riches or Pleaſures more than Chriſt, is not worthy of him, cannot be his Diſciple. Do you truly in judgment and affections, account it your chief happineſs to enjoy the Lord Jeſus Chriſt? is he the chiefeſt of Ten thouſand in your eyes, altogether lovely? Can you ſay with

with *David*, Psal. 16. 5, *The Lord is my portion?* or with him, *Psal.* 73. 25, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth I desire beside thee, or in competition with thee?* So that whatever temptations to the contrary you meet with, you do in your settled prevailing judgment, prefer Christ before all, and count all loss and dung in comparison of the excellency of the knowledg of Christ, making him the end of your desires and endeavours, putting the world and all other things behind him in your esteem and pursuit, and thinking no labour, nor losses, nor sufferings too great for Christ.

2. Are you willing to receive Christ as Lord as well as Saviour? submit to him as King, as well as accept of him as Redeemer? and come not only for ease and rest, but to take his yoke upon you, and become his Servants? Is Christ your Lord and Master to guide and govern your hearts, and thoughts, and lives, by his Laws and Statutes? and is it your ordinary purpose, desire, and endeavour to obey him, even when he commands the hardest duties, and those which most cross the desire and interest of the flesh, and 'tis your sorrow when you break your resolutions herein? then Christ is yours: But if you are only content to be saved by him from Hell when you dye, in the mean time, he shall command you no further than will stand with your credit, or pleasure, or worldly estate and ends, and did never heartily consent that he should rule over you,

nor reſign up your ſouls and bodies to be governed and diſpoſed by him, nor took his Word for a Law and Rule of your thoughts and actions; but if he would give you leave, you had rather live after the world and fleſh, than after the Word and Spirit: he is not yet yours: though you may in words call him Lord and Maſter, yet in your works you deny him. He is his Friend and Diſciple that keeps his commandments, *John* 15. 7, 14, but they that would not hearken to his voice, would none of him, he gave them up to their own hearts luſts, *Pſal.* 8. 11.

3. Have you received the Spirit of Chriſt? The Apoſtle makes the former and this, characters of ſuch as have received Chriſt. 1 Joh. 3. 24, *He that keepeth his commandments dwells in him, and Chriſt in him; hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the ſpirit which he hath given us.* Well then, do ye obey the Laws of Chriſt, and walk in his ways, conform to his example, and live the life of Jeſus? He that doth not thus, may ſay, he abides in Chriſt; but he doth but ſay ſo; 'tis not ſo in truth and reallity. 1 Joh. 2. 6, *He that ſaith he abides in Chriſt, ought to walk as he walked.* Further, Let me ask you the queſtion the Apoſtle asked the Diſciples at *Epheſus*, *Acts.* 19 2, Whether have you received the Holy Ghoſt? If God have given Chriſt to you, Chriſt hath given you his holy Spirit; *For if any man have not the ſpirit of Chriſt, he is*

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none of his, Rom. 8. 9. 1 John 4. 13, *Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his ſpirit:* The Spirit, not as reſiding in Chriſt, but as given to us, is an evidence that we have received Chriſt. Well then, let every one of you be now inquiſitive, and put ſuch interrogatories as theſe to himſelf, Have I the Spirit? is he given to me? doth he dwell in my ſoul? have I the ſpirit of illumination and revelation, *Eph.* 1. 17? Do I ſee ſuch things as I never ſaw before, as the inexpreſſible vileneſs and loathſomneſs of ſin, the greateſt beauty in holineſs, *&c*? Have I the ſpirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, to quicken me and raiſe me up from the dead? *Rom.* 8. 2. 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. Have I felt the ſpirit of conviction, to convince me of ſin, righteouſneſs and judgment, *John* 16. 8? The ſpirit of grace and ſupplication, ſtirring up to, and aſſiſting in that heavenly duty of Prayer, *Zech.* 12. 10? The ſpirit of holyneſs to ſanctifie me, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2, to mortifie my ſins and corruptions, *Rom.* 8. 13, and work up my heart to all holy obedience, *Ezek.* 36. 27? Am I renewed in the ſpirit of my mind? is Gods Image repaired in me? am I transformed into the ſame image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord? Am I growing in grace, perfecting holineſs in the fear of the Lord? Do I walk in all Gods Ways and Statutes freely, regulariv, conſtantly? Am I willing to ſacrifice an *Iſaac*, a *Benjamin*, an *Abſolom*,

ſolom, a *Delilah*, *Herodias*, and hew, with *Samuel*, delicate *Agag* in pieces? or with *David* keep my ſelf from mine own iniquity? Is the old man dead? the fleſh with all its curſed retinue mortified? do I deteſt and loath every ſin, in thought word and deed, and that not ſo much for its effects, as for its nature; and hate it rather as Hell, than for Hell? Enquire what do you find of theſe high and gracious operations of the ſpirit in your ſelves; he is always an active working Spirit, is he ſo in you? Doth he raiſe your hearts to heavenly things, and draw forth your ſouls to Chriſt? O deal faithfully with your own ſouls; let the ſearch be deep and thorow, go to the bottom of your deceitful hearts, bring things to an iſſue, be ſure that you be not miſtaken.

4. If Chriſt be received, there will be a more earneſt intent, deſire and breathing of ſoul after him; he that hath once taſted the ſweetneſs of his grace, and ſeen the ſplendor of his beauty, will be ſo far from being ſatisfied, that he will ſtill more and more thirſt after him; the more excellency the ſoul apprehends in him, the more vehement and reſtleſs are his deſires towards him. Thus it was with the Spouſe, *Cant.* 2. 3, 4, 5, ſhe had a glance of him, and cries out, *As the Apple-tree among the trees of the wood, ſo is my beloved among the ſons.* Here the Spouſe ſeems to be ſtrongly moved with affection, and be-

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fore her beloved had well ended his ſpeech, breaks out into an affectionate Elogy of him, which ſhe is not able to expreſs, but conquered with her own paſſion, ſhe ſits down and breathes for comfort: *I ſate down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte:* Here the ſoul receives and applys Chriſt with ſweet relliſh to her palate, & comfort to her heart: *He brought me to the banqueting houſe, and his banner over me was love:* ſhe ſtill taſts more of the riches of his Grace; and what was the effect of this? did ſhe ſurfeit with eating his fruit and banquetting? no, ſhe is more raviſht with deſire, *Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am ſick of love: I am wounded, nay ſlain* (as ſome Interpreters) *with love:* which by the ſweet vehemency and inſatiability of it, makes the heart to burn and weep, groan and ſigh; to forget all, and drive away all but him, on whom alone ſhe fixeth, and would reſt, but cannot center till ſhe enjoy him in glory; till then ſhe is ſick and weary, and lives not in her ſelf, but in him in whom her life is hid. As *Plato* defines love, an ardour or flame of a ſoul dead in its own body, and living in another. One thus writes to his friend, *I have for the preſent a ſick life, much pain and love-ſickneſs for Chriſt. O what would I give to have a bed made to my wearied ſoul, in his boſom! O when ſhall we meet? O how long is it to the dawning of the marriage-day? O ſweet Lord Jeſus take wide ſteps: O my beloved come leaping*

ing over the mountains of ſeparation: O that he would fold the heavens together like an old cloak, and ſhovel time and days out of the way, and come away.

Well, have you pain, and ſick-nights for Chriſt? do your thoughts continually run on him? and would you do any thing for compaſſing of him, and abſtain from any thing that would croſs thy deſires to enjoy him, content to go through any difficulties and diſcouragements, to bear reproach, loſſes for him, and canſt not live without him? then he is thine.

But if you can ſit down contented without him, grow ſtrange and keep at diſtance many days, weeks and years together, and yet quiet and merry: If you can live without his preſence and never miſs it, not a ſmile from his face, not a look of love from you to him, and yet no trouble follows; can make a ſhift with the carnal contentments to ſupply his room; can bear his abſence, and feel no want of him, 'tis an ill ſign, you either never received him at all, or are in a dead condition.

5. Do ye ſmell and ſavour of Chriſt where-ever you come, and endeavour to draw others to him? have your words and carriage been ſuch as to give teſtimony to others of your love and propriety to Chriſt? He that hath received this gift may be known by the ſmell and fragrancy he ſends forth out of the heart into every part of man, thoughts, words, works,

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are all gracious and ſavoury; there's the ſavour of Chriſt; or of the knowledg of Chriſt manifeſted in every place, 2 *Cor.* 2. 14,15. alluding to the Ointment of the Prieſts, and the ſweet incenſe they offered; Chriſt ſaith, *I am the roſe of Sharon*, Cant. 2. 1. Now if withering roſes put in a box can perfume the clothes that lye in it, and caſt a ſweet and delicate ſmell, how much more muſt their words and lives be ſweet and fragant who carry about with them Jeſus Chriſt, *Whoſe garments ſmell of myrrh, aloes, and caſſia*, Pſal. 45. 8.

Euſebius in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, reports of *Polycarpus*, that when he was to be ſacrificed unto the Lord by fire, by the hands of moſt bloody Perſecutors, as he was ſtanding in the midſt of the fire, all reſplendent, like ſhining burniſht gold, his body did ſend forth ſuch an odoriferous and ſweet ſavour as they of *Smyrna* received it in an Epiſtle) as if he had been perfumed with incenſe, or ſome other fragrant and aromatical eſſence. Now though every ordinary Chriſtians body do not yield ſuch a miraculous odour, yet you may read as much in effect of a moſt gracious perfume, with which the precious ſouls of all Chriſts believing members, (his myſtical Spouſe) do ſend forth in a moſt ſweet and pleaſant manner. *Cant.* 3. 6. *Who is this that cometh out of the wilderneſs like pillars of ſmoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincenſe, with all the powders of the merchants?* i.e. ſweetned with all the moſt fragrant and

ſweet

ſweet-ſmelling Graces of the Spirit of Chriſt, who is the merchant here ſpoken of. O how deſirous is every one that hath received this gift and taſted that the Lord is gracious, to communicate him unto others! As 'tis the nature and property of grace and goodneſs, to be diffuſive and communicative of it ſelf: ſo would every true believer impart Chriſt to his friends and neighbours, and even travels over them till Chriſt be formed in them too. If you have this talent, this pearl of great price, you will be far from laying it up in a napkin, or locking it up in a cabinet, but be much in commending him to others; 'tis their delight to be ſpeaking of the beauties, excellencies and perfections of their beloved: as the Spouſe whoſe whole language is all love, and her heart is ſo full, that her lips overflow with the mention of the Excellencies of Chriſt, *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefeſt of ten thouſand, &c.* This is my friend, and this is my beloved, *O ye daughters of Jeruſalem*, Cant 5. 19.

The *Samaritan* woman, no ſooner had Chriſt diſcovered himſelf in plain terms to her, ſaying, *I that ſpeak unto thee am he*; that is the Meſſias: but the firſt thing that we hear of her, *ver.* 28. ſhe leaves her water-pot, and water, for which ſhe came, ſhe neglects her civil buſineſs, forgets her natural wants, and runs into the City and calls the people of the place, *Come and ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Chriſt?* Such is the excel-

excellency of heavenly treaſures, (ever moſt diffuſive of themſelves) if one find them, there is no reſt until he communicate the ſame to others: If one find any ſecular treaſure, he will carefully conceal it, becauſe the more communicate therein, the leſs muſt every ſharer have, (as the three men travelling towards *Jeruſalem*, *&c.*) But the more by thee are brought to Chriſt, the more thou haſt of his Divine riches; ſhe ſaith not, go out and ſee a man, but *come and ſee*; the ſeed of this knowledg cannot lye dead in the heart, *Pſal.* 116. 10. *I believed, therefore have I ſpoken.* It's like the Widows oil, increaſes by pouring out. They have but a doubtful ſhare in Chriſt, who pretending to ſend others to him, will not go themſelves; nor doth ſhe take upon her to define or teach, ſhe only leadeth them to hear Chriſt, content to perſwade, to ſee what ſhe had found. So *John*, *Andrew* and *Philip*, how ready to tell others of Chriſt, *Joh.* 1. 29, 41, 45. *Paul* being once enlightned himſelf, with the ſaving knowledg of Chriſt, had *great heavineſs and continual ſorrow in his heart, and could wiſh himſelf accurſed from Chriſt for his brethren and kinſmen according to the fleſh*, *Rom.* 9. 1. So he that hath taſted the ſweetneſs of Chriſt will not reſt, but will be wiſely upon all occaſions relating the love-paſſages betwixt Chriſt and him, and telling his neighbours and friends the Excellencies of Chriſt, and what he feels: *O come and hear, I will declare what God hath done for my ſoul*, Pſal. 66. 16.

2. What

2. What ſhall we do to make Chriſt our own? this appropriation and application of the gift of God, is a very great thing: what can be ſo deſirable as this, what ſo worthy of your ſtudy and endeavours as to have Chriſt with all his benefits? O that you would be perſwaded with greateſt diligence and faithfulneſs to ſeek this priviledg! Give no ſleep to your eyes, nor ſlumber to your eye-lids till you have made ſure of this gift. As ever you deſire a ſolid foundation to build upon for exemption from miſery, and enjoyment of comfort; the happineſs and ſafety of your future ſtate depends upon your preſent application of Chriſt.

1. Believe, get and act faith; let it be your main care and endeavour to be believers; for let me tell you, in the very firſt moment of believing you will actually be partakers of Chriſt; Chriſt is in the ſoul as ſoon as ever faith is in it, this is the moſt precious and excellent grace that is receptive of Chriſt; the hand whereby we take him, as he is offered and held forth unto us in the Goſpel. Some define faith a moſt affectionate accepting of Chriſt as Saviour and Lord: It is (ſay others) a ſaving-grace wrought in the heart of a ſinner by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby he being convinced of his ſin and miſery, and of the diſability in himſelf, and all other creatures to recover him out of his loſt condition, not only aſſents to the truth of the

the promiſe of the Goſpel, but receives and reſts upon Chriſt and his Righteouſneſs therein held forth for pardon of ſin, and for the accepting and accounting of his perſon righteous in the ſight of God for ſalvation. I'm ſure the Scripture makes this to be our accepting of Chriſt, 1 *Joh.* 3. 16. *God ſo loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believed on him might not periſh, &c.* 1 Joh. 1. 12. *But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* We come to him and feed on him by faith, *Joh.* 6. 35. And he dwells in our hearts by faith, *Epheſ.* 3. 17. The Woman conſenting to take the man for her Husband, upon that the Matrimonial union follows, he is hers, and ſhe his; ſo the ſinner conſenting to the receiving and obeying of Chriſt (which is one main act of faith upon which he is made his): This is one of faiths royal excellencies, nothing puts a greater worth and glory upon it than this great effect. Well then, ſee that you make ſure of it; put forth this hand of faith and take Chriſt; are ye without it in the ſad ſtate of unbelief? you have no ſhare in, nor can make no claim to this gift ſo long as it is thus with you; you muſt be put into another ſtate, and become true believers, then 'twill be well. But do not content your ſelves with a Dogmatical, Hiſtorical faith, an eaſie common preſumptuous falſe faith, which is in the generality of men: Be ſincere and ſound believers, flatter not your ſelves with

with an idle inoperative faith; have ſuch a faith as purifies the heart, works by love, overcomes the world; you muſt heartily cloſe with whole Chriſt, according to the Goſpel-offer; let your truſt, relyance, confidence for pardon, life and ſalvation, be grounded upon him, and him only. You muſt caſt your ſelves upon his alone merits, renouncing every thing in your ſelves; holding forth the two hands of faith, with the one to lay hold on Chriſt, and with the other to reſign up your ſelves to Chriſt. You muſt be throughly convinced of ſin and miſery, that you have undone and deſtroyed your ſelves, and in the ſenſe of nakedneſs, wretchedneſs and periſhing, ſee an abſolute neceſſity of Chriſt, that unleſs he juſtifie you, you muſt be condemned; unleſs he ſave you, you muſt burn in hell for ever; and ſo cry give me Chriſt or elſe I die: and have reſtleſs importunate deſires of the ſoul towards him, as a condemned man for pardon, a hungry man for meat: O that Chriſt were mine, Oh that I might enjoy him! I cannot live without him. I know not whether Chriſt will own me, and ſmile on me or no; I know not whether Chriſt will come to me, and beſtow himſelf on ſo mean and vile a creature? But I'le go out to him; I'le venture all, if I periſh, I periſh, my deſire is towards him; and I'le caſt my ſelf and all upon him, and with tears and crys ſay, *Lord I believe, help my unbelief.*

2. Pray;

2. Pray go unto God for this gift, for it is his; you can never deserve, therefore beg it, and ask grace to receive and apply it. No man cometh unto the Son, except the Father which hath sent him, draw him, *John* 6. 44. All things are of God, 2 *Cor.* 5 18. Creating is his work, *Eph.* 2 10. Go then and lye and wait at the throne of Grace, and earnestly intreat God to give Christ to thee, and make him thine; though thou have no promise to urge God with, yet put him in remembrance, how he hath said in scripture, that he hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he should turn and live: Tell him that thou art a sinner, yet God commends his love, in that Christ dyed for men while they were yet sinners: He came to reconcile even ememies, to give guts even to the rebellious: His business was to seek and save lost Sheep, of whom thou art one; tell him you have no whither to go but unto him; be earnest and importunate, and then wait: though he hide his face, and answer not, yet continue praying and knocking at the gate of mercy; cry aloud, Lord give me Christ, O give me Christ, or else I dye and perish: Good Lord what ever thou denyest me, deny me not Christ. Lord upon my bended knees, I ask him of thee; O shut not out my Prayer; if I have not Christ I am undone. Remember his carriage towards the woman of *Canaan*, *Matt.* 15. 26, he puts her

off, either no answer, or that which was worse than none; yet her importunity in crying still, Lord help me, at last prevailed, and she got a gracious and comfortable answer, obtained what she asked and more: remember for your incouragement, you are calling on him that's calling on you; and seeking him that first loves and seeks you. Pray for faith, even that also is the gift of God, *Eph.* 2. 8. Christ is the author and finisher of faith, *Heb.* 12. 2. Fall down before the throne of Grace, before and after the hearing of the word, and beg earnestly of God, that as he hath given you hands to take your meat, so he would also give you the hand of Faith, wherewith to apprehend Jesus Christ: pray and wait.

3 That you may the better do thus, and be inabled to believe and pray, attend diligently the Word and Ordinances, which are the ordinary means to convey this gift to the Children of men. 'Tis by these golden pipes that golden oyl is carryed to men, *Zech.* 4. 12. The Word must be read, heard, and meditated on, *Joh.* 6. 44, 45. 'Tis by hearing the Father, and learning of him, that we come to Christ; 'tis not without his drawing, but he draws by these means. The Scriptures do testifie of him, and by them we may come to the knowledg of him; and if we know him, we shall desire him: and if so, we shall have him, as in the Text.

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The Word (I ſay) Read or Preached, but eſpecially the latter; for he hath ſaid, *Matt.* 18. 20, *Where two or three are come together in my name, there am I in the midſt of them: q. d.* If you want me, and would know where to find me, ſtudy both the Law and Goſpel, that is the School-maſter to ſhew you the need of him, to ſhake the Soul out of ſecurity, and to humble you through convictions. And this is that whereby he offers himſelf to you expreſly, calls and invites you to him, *Come to me poor weary ſinners, &c.* He is vailed in the Law, revealed in the Goſpel; there held forth in Types, here in Truth; in all, Chriſt is the ſubſtance to be found in every page; frequent therefore his Ordinances, they are his Gallery, where he loves to walk; and here, if any where, you may find him, or hear of him; enquire in the way he has appointed. So the Spouſe, Cant. 1. 7, *Tell me, O thou, whom my ſoul loveth, where thou feedeſt, where thou makeſt thy flocks to reſt at noon; for why ſhould I be as one that turneth aſide by the flocks of thy companions?* Chriſt preſently and lovingly anſwers, *If thou know not (O thou faireſt among women) go thy way forth (q. d.* up and riſe, and get out, ſit not ſtill, lamenting and crying, Lord, Lord, but go out of your ſelves) *by the foot-ſteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beſides the ſhepherds tents. Qui Chriſtum ſine eccleſia quærit, errare & fatigari poteſt, in venire non poteſt,* ſaith *Bed.* you may ſeek long enough, *&c.*

Cant. 6. begin. The Daughters of *Jeruſalem* hearing ſo much of the worth, beauty and excellency of Chriſt, had an earneſt deſire to ſeek him with the Spouſe, therefore enquire whither is thy beloved gone, (*O thou faireſt among women*) whither is thy beloved turned aſide, that we may ſeek him with thee. This repetition argues both the vehemency of their affections, and their expedition; no excuſes nor delays can be admitted in this caſe.

If any that hear me be of this mind, having heard ſo much of Chriſts worth; obſerve the anſwer of the Spouſe, *My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the bed of ſpices, to feed in the garden, and to gather lillies.* His Garden is the Church, there attend his motions.

4. Believe, and Pray, and attend Ordinances, with an empty hand and hungry ſoul; let go and be ſtript of your ſelves and all other things, that you may receive Chriſt, thus the Apoſtle did, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8, 9, 10, quit all intereſt in your ſelves, all dependance on the creature, break your league with ſin, renounce your own righteouſneſs, account all things dung and loſs that you may gain Chriſt; leave all for him, prefer him above all the world, conſent to his covenant, ſay you will have him on any terms, and he is yours; unleſs you deny your ſelves, you cannot accept this gift, the world, and the things of it: Sin, and the fleſh, and your own righteouſneſs, is that ſelf that muſt be denied.

1. You

1. You must deny and relinquish the world, and all carnal relations; *What will it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* If the heart be divided between Christ and the world, there will be always a disproportion, the world will have most, and Christ least. Do not overvalue or love the wealth of the world; the young man bid fair at Christ, but stuck at this Say with that Marquels *Galeacius Cariac.* tempted by a Jesuite with a mighty sum of Money; *Let their Money perish with them, that esteem all the gold in the world worth one days communion with Jesus Christ.* Or Christ will say, if you set so much by the world, take it and see what it can do for you; if you can spare me better than your wealth, you shall be without me. *He that loveth houses or lands, yea, father or mother, more than me, is not worthy of me,* Matt. 10. 37, 38. Luk. 14. 26, *If any man come after me, and hateth not father and mother, wife and children, brethren and sisters, yea, his own life, cannot be my desciple:* which is not to be understood simply (as if the service of Christ required the violation of the Laws of God and Nature) but comparatively, as *Jerome, If my Father should be weeping on his knees before me, and my Mother hanging on my neck behind me, and all my Brethren and Kinsfolks howl on every side, I would despise all, and throw them off, to go to Christ when he calls me.* If any think this would not consist with natural affection, hear

what *Kilian* the *Dutch* Schoolmaſter and Martyr ſaid, *If the whole world were Gold, and mine to diſpoſe of, I would give it to live with my Wife and Children (though in Priſon), yet my Soul and Chriſt are dearer to me than all.* Pſal. 45. 10, *Forget thy own people, and thy fathers houſe,* &c.

2. Sin muſt be denied and forſaken: Chriſt and *Belial*, purity and corruption, can have no fellowſhip: Depart from all iniquity, Jeſus Chriſt and one allowed luſt cannot lodge together in the ſame Soul. He that prefers any luſt before Chriſt, deſerves to go without him; but he that with indignation parts with his ſins ſhall have the Pearl of price in their room.

3. you muſt deny your own righteouſneſs; this is the hardeſt part of ſelf-denyal, yet neceſſary; Chriſt came not to call the righteous but ſinners; the whole need not the Phyſitian but the ſick; there muſt be ſenſe of ſin, guilt, ſhame and nakedneſs, as *Noah*'s Dove. So long as the prodigal could make any ſhift to live, he returned not; or the woman with the bloody iſſue had any thing to ſpend, ſhe came not to Chriſt; like the man caſt from an high Tower, and ſtuck to the *Mulberry*-tree, and ſcap'd. A wounded man haſts to the Chyrurgeon, ſick to the Phyſician, the man purſued by the avenger of blood, to the City of refuge; ſo a poor Soul, broken with the inſupportable burden of his ſin, wrath of God, curſe of the Law, will be willing, with a wit-

witneſs, to caſt it ſelf into the opened arms, and inviting embracements of Jeſus Chriſt bleeding on the Croſs, tendred in the Goſpel, and ſo made his for ever; you muſt ſell all that you have, and thus buy the Pearl.

5. Do all this preſently, ſpeedily; defer it not till to morrow; *now is the accepted time, now is the day of ſalvation, Seek you the Lord while he may be found, Iſa.* 55. 6. While he offers himſelf in the miniſtry of his Word, while he ſaith ſeek ye my face, let your heart anſwer, thy face do I ſeek. *To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; to day, after ſo long a time, Heb.* 4. 7. If you will do it at all, do it betimes, before the day of grace, and time of repentance be expired, and the door of mercy be ſhut. As the Jewiſh *Rabbi* ſaid of repentance, *Do it to day, becauſe thou knoweſt not thou ſhalt live till to morrow.* You know not that ever this gift ſhall be offered again, this may be the laſt time to thee; your life may be gone, and then *actum eſt*——or means removed, or judicial hardneſs inflicted, according to that dreadful threat, *Matt.* 13. 14, *Hearing, ye ſhall hear, and not underſtand, &c.* no judgment ſo terrible on this ſide Hell; or *he ſwear in his wrath, you ſhall not enter into his reſt*; God forbids his people to feed on thoſe twilight birds, the Bats, ſignifying prolongers of repentance, who think to flutter confuſedly about Chriſt in the evening of their withered years, and dream of a devout retire-

ment in old age. Now Christ stands at the door and knocks, the spirit strives, but the time is coming when many shall call and knock, and it shall not be opened, *Prov.* 1. 24.

I shall add a word of admonition and serious warning, to them who have not yet, nor are now resolved to accept this incomparable gift of God; and that in the words of the Apostle, *See that ye refuse not him that speaks from heaven, Heb.* 12. 25, yea that came down from Heaven to seek and save your lost souls. Now that Christ is freely offered to you by the Gospel, if you set at nought his counsel, and make light of his invitations, and receive the Grace of God in vain, it had been better for you, that you had never been born, or never heard the Gospel. Now that God hath proclaimed terms of peace, and shewed himself so unwilling that ye should perish, that he gave his only begotten Son for you, and to you, and exacted nothing from you but acceptance, that ye might have in him eternal life: If you still refuse this gift, and reject this counsel, remaining under unbelief, it doth exceedingly aggravate your sin and judgment, it makes your sin above measure sinful; your sin is inexcusable, your condemnation unavoidable; and your punishment will be intollerable. Consider what you do, and be wise before it be too late, you exceedingly dishonour God, undervalue Christ, gratifie Satan, Sin most inexcusably, and undo your selves utterly.

1. If

1. If you do not receive and improve this gift when offered in the Goſpel, you do exceedingly diſhonour God; What greater reproach is there amongſt men, than to refuſe a gift offered freely out of love, without any ground, motive, or occaſion, from the party that is to have it? or deny to accept of an invitation to a great feaſt, or fair eſtate, if intreated and ſolicited to take it? 'Tis a ſowr unmannerlineſs, and ſawcy proud preſumption, to preſcribe on what terms they will have, or when they will not be beholding to their ſuperiors. 'Tis a great diſhonour to God, that vile ſinful duſt and aſhes, will not accept of his gracious offer of his Son. If a King ſhould come to a Priſoner condemned by the Law to death, and lying in Chains, and offer to ſet him free, or put his Son in his ſtead, *&c.* but he ſo loves his bondage, and hugs his chains that he will not be delivered. You caſt diſhonour upon all the glorious Attributes of God,

His Truth; He that receives Chriſt, gives as much glory to the Truth of God as poſſibly he can; he ſets to his ſeal that God is true, *John* 3. 33. But he that receives not this gift, believes not God, and ſo makes him (who is truth it ſelf) a lyar, becauſe he believes not the record which God gave of his Son, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. O what horrid indignity is this to the moſt faithful God!

His

His Mercy, wherein he delights, which as it is above all his works; ſo this of beſtowing Chriſt on men is above all his mercies. It is no leſs than ſpurning at bowels of mercy, *Rom.* 2. 4, and deſpiſing of riches of goodneſs.

His Power; 'Tis a ſad diminution of the glory of his Power and Soveraignty; as if he could not do what he hath promiſed, if we accept his offers: or what he hath threatned if we refuſe it. *Abraham* on the contrary, was ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God, being fully perſwaded, that what he had promiſed, he was able to perform, *Rom.* 4. 20.

His Wiſdom; It's a rejecting the counſel of Heaven, and contemning that unconceivable depth of Wiſdom, that contrived a way for Mercy and Juſtice to meet, that his Glory might be advanced, and ſinning and periſhing man might be ſaved.

His Juſtice, How great is the affront that ſinners offer to his Juſtice, that ſinners go on to provoke him with their unbelief and wickedneſs; and as it were dare him to puniſh them.

In a word, his Infallibleneſs and Unchangeableneſs are called in queſtion: when his gracious promiſes are not believed and embraced, men judg him a perſon not fit to be credited: The giving of the lye is accounted the greateſt injury and diſgrace amongſt men; but eſpecially this is a great injury to God, becauſe he ſtands

ſtands more upon his word than upon any other part of his name, *Pſal.* 138. 2. *He hath magnified his word above all his name.* And we have more experience of God making good his word, than in any other thing. Thus not receiving Chriſt doth rob God of his declarative glory, it rifles his cabinet, and takes away his chiefeſt jewel, even that glory which he ſaith he will not give unto another.

2. You do very unworthily ſlight and undervalue Jeſus Chriſt. When a gift is offered, if you deny to accept it, you not only diſhonour him that offers it, but you diſparage the gift it ſelf, you diſeſteem it as not worthy your acceptance; and is Jeſus Chriſt ſo worthleſs and inconſiderable a gift, as that thou wilt not take him at the hands of God? O horrible ingratitude! *Be ye aſtoniſhed O ye heavens, for my people have committed two evils,* (ah theſe two are thouſands and millions) *they have forſaken me the fountain of living waters, &c.* Is it not the voice of Chriſt in the Goſpel, Who will have me? Who will receive me? and is it not the Goſpel-quarrel, *Ye will not come to me that ye may have life,* Joh. 5. 40. 'Tis the greateſt folly to ſet ſo low a rate on Chriſt, for he is the ſum and ſubſtance, marrow and worth of the whole word, and all the works of God, the moſt excellent glory of all perſons and things in the world.

1. Survey the Word of God from end to end, and you ſhall find that there is nothing of excellency but what is derived from, or reduced unto Chriſt,

Chriſt; he is called by one *verbum abbreviatum*, the contracted Word, into which all words are reduced, as the rivers into the Sea; from this word they came, unto this word they tend, and within this word they are all contained. 'Tis obſerved by *Jerome*, that the ſum of all knowledg is Divinity, the ſum of all Divinity is the Scripture; for that is ſufficient to make the man of God perfect, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16, 17 and every Chriſtian wiſe unto Salvation. The ſum of the Scripture is the Goſpel, for *that is the power of God for the ſalvation of them that believe*, Rom. 1. 16. and the ſum of the Goſpel is Chriſt. *For theſe things (i.e.* the Goſpel*) were written that you might believe, that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God, and that in believing you might have eternal life*, Joh. 20. 31.

If you conſider the Old Teſtament, it is nothing elſe but the vail, ſhadow and promiſe of Chriſt; obſerve all the Types, the Tree of Life, the Ark of *Noah*, the Ladder of *Jacob*, the Mercy-ſeat, the brazen Serpent, and all ſuch Myſtical Types and Typical figures we read of, what are they elſe but Chriſt? take away the ſubſtance, and what is the ſhadow? And not only ſo, but even all the men of note, *Noah*, *Iſaac*, *Joſeph*, *Moſes*, *Aaron*, *Joſhua*, *Samſon*, *David*, *Solomon*, Kings, Prieſts, Prophets, Titles of Dignity, Names of Honour, or whatever elſe was aſcribed to them, to expreſs their Dignity and Soveraignty, they were only uſed to expreſs thoſe tranſcendent Excellencies which

theſe

theſe perſonal Types did adumbrate, and appear moſt properly to belong unto this Prince of Peace.

2. So for the New Teſtament, he is almoſt expreſſed, but always intended and implied in every chapter, verſe, line, and word thereof: Take away Chriſt out of the Goſpel, and there remains nothing but empty words: Take Chriſt out of the Hiſtory, and it is but a meer Fable; and remove him from the Doctrine thereof, and it falls to the ground, being without a foundation. Take Chriſt out of the Precepts, and they are not of force, or a yoke too heavy for us to bear. Take him out of the Promiſes and they are not *Yea and Amen.* The Promiſes without Chriſt, are Wells ſealed up, bones without marrow. In the Epiſtles, if Chriſt be abſent, there is no *Grace, Mercy, or Peace.*

2. He is the prime and marrow of all things as well as of words, as *Auſtin* tells us, having gone through all Creatures, and enquired of them for God, each one of them did anſwer, I am not he. *Sed per ipſum ſum, quem quæris in me,* but I have my being from him, whom thou ſeekeſt in me. So if we view the whole Creation, and note the particular excellencies of every Creature, we ſhould find that all theſe are derived from Chriſt; he is the pearl of the word and of the world. Is there any thing praiſeworthy and excellent (even in our eſtimation) which we may not find Chriſt comprehend the ſame eminently in himſelf as the vertue and

per-

perfection of the effect is in the cauſe. If riches be deſirable and excellent, Chriſt is rich and Lord of all, in him are unſearchable riches, treaſures of wiſdom and knowledg. If you talk of honours, as riches ſo honours are his. *We behold his glory as of the only begotten Son of God.* When man was at firſt created, he was created with honour and glory, *Pſal.* 8. 5. but Chriſt is better than man in his primitive purity and original ſplendour, not men only but Angels alſo worſhip him, *Heb.* 1. 6. *Philip.* 2. 9. *God hath highly exalted him*; he ſaith not ὁ θεὸς ἀυτὸν ὑψωσε, God hath highted him, but hath ὑπερύψωσε, over-highted or ſuper-exalted him, *and hath given him* ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρπαν ὄνομα, *a name above all names*, that is real honour above all names, all expreſſions, and above all thoughts, and above all excellencies, not only in this world, but in the world to come. *O how excellent is his name in all the earth*, Pſal. 8. 1.

If there be any worth in pleaſures, as many conceive, here then is an object altogether lovely and delightful; here is beauty to delight the eye, ſweeteſt muſick in his voice to raviſh the ear, and that which pleaſes all the ſenſes of the inward man.

Another eſteemed excellency is Wiſdom, which *Solomon* ſaith *exceedeth folly, as far as light exceedeth darkneſs*, Eccleſ 2. 13. Now herein doth the excellency of Chriſt chiefly appear, for he was *filled with wiſdom*, Luk. 2. 40.

In

In him were hid treasures of wisdom, *Col.* 2. 3. He is the Wisdom of God, and saith, *Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom, I am understanding.*

In a word; there is one excellency more, and but one in this world, far transcending all these, that is, Grace, for that makes a man excellent, *Psal.* 16. 2, *The righteous is more excellent, more honourable than his neighbour*, Prov. 12.26. and procures a name *better than of sons and daughters, even an everlasting name that cannot be cut off*, Isa. 56. 5. But the grace of any Christian, is but as the drop to the Ocean, in regard of the grace of Christ, who is full of grace and truth, *John* 1. 14. Grace is poured into his lips, *Psal.* 45. 2. yea such uncreated grace hath no one.

Christ is better than health, than wealth, than peace, than pleasure, than wisdom or grace: Christ made ours by his Fathers gift and goodness, hath all the sweetness, comfort, and happiness of all these in him, and infinitely more, All these are but streams that lead us to the fountain, but beams that guide our eyes to that Father of lights, to that Son of righteousness, God reconciled, God incarnate.

3. Christ is the first and chiefest of all persons which raises him one degree higher in his superlative excellency. 'Tis reported of *Apelles*, that at his drawing of his rare pictures of *Venus* (among the Heathens stiled *the Goddess of beauty*) that he assembled together the most beau-

beautiful Women of the Island of *Coos*, comprehending in that his own work, their divided perfections: so to conclude this Encomium of Christ, I shall collect the Eminencies of all things, and persons, and beings, and shew that he is the chiefest of all chieftains, the choicest of all choice persons, in Heaven and Earth, God, Angels, and Men; of gods so called, he is the chiefest, nay he stands alone, he is the only true and wise God, 1 *Tim.* 1. 17. Of Angels he is the chief, the Angel of the Lords substantial presence, *Isa.* 63. 9. he is the Archangel, 1 *Thes.* 4. 16. the Prince and Head of those glorious spirits, *Col.* 2. 10. the head of all principalities and powers: Of men, he is the prince and choicest, the chiefest of ten thousand, the standard-bearer among the armies of Angels and men, the choice of the flock, the flower, the rose, the glory of all the children of men, yea, he contains all their excellencies; whereof some had one excellency, some another, he hath all. *Abraham* was excellent in his faith, *Moses* in his choice, *Job* in his patience, *David* in his sincerity, having a heart like Gods heart; but Christ hath all eminency of grace in one; some are gods, but must dye like men: Christ is the Prince of life that never dyes; some are wise, but he is wisdom it self; some are strong, but he is most mighty; some are fair, but Christ is fairer than the Sons of men.

Among

Among relations he is the chief, among ſhepherds, he is the chief ſhepherd of our ſouls, 1 *Pet.* 5. 4. the good ſhepherd, *John* 10. 11. Among Sons, he is the firſt-begotten Son, *Heb.* 1. 6. the firſt-born of every creature, *Col.* 1. 15. the firſt-born among many brethren, *Rom.* 8 29. ſtill he hath the preheminence.

Among Prophets, Prieſts and Kings, he is the moſt excellent, and far tranſcends all others; he is in every reſpect abſolutely perfect; and a ſuperlatively excellent Saviour, ſo that there is none ſuch, no Saviour beſides him; this is the perſon whom you undervalue and make light of.

3. By refuſing this gift of God, you do exceedingly gratifie Satan, the great enemy of your ſouls. If a man had conference with the Prince of Darkneſs, and ſhould make this motion to him, wherein he might moſt ſerve and gratifie him; I am confident it would be his only wiſh to ſuch a ſoul, above any thing in the world, that he would keep at diſtance from Chriſt, neither come near Him, nor his Ordinances, have nothing to do with him. Now will any be ſo ſtupid as to gratifie his greateſt adverſary to his own unſpeakable prejudice? Is it not horrible indignity to Chriſt, monſtrous cruelty to the ſoul to refuſe Chriſt, who hath done and ſuffered ſo much for him, and to be led by Satan captive and blindfold into miſery? to ſlight Chriſts ſweet invitations; and yield to Satans malicious temptations? Satan is that

ſtrong man that hath power over all men in nature, he keeps his goods in peace in the palace of our hearts, and there ſports himſelf in carrying on the deſign of the ſouls ruin; ſometimes by policy, ſometimes by force, he keeps poſſeſſion, *Luk.* 11. 21, 22. And wherein can a man more deſignedly gratifie Satan, further his wicked deſigns, and eſtabliſh his kingdom, yea enlarge his dominion, than by ſiding with him againſt Chriſt, who beſiegeth the ſoul with Ordinances and Providences? for Satan knows well enough, that Chriſts riſe will be his fall; Chriſts ſcepter will be his deſtruction; that when Chriſt a ſtronger than he comes, he will overcome him, and take from him all his armour wherein he truſted, pull down his ſtrong holds, divide the ſpoils, and deliver poor captive man out of priſon and ſlavery. O then do not ſo much gratifie Satan.

4. If you refuſe Jeſus Chriſt offered in the Goſpel, you are guilty of the greateſt ſin and folly that can be. Though for moſt part, men think not ſo of it, and accordingly lay it not to heart, yet it is the greateſt ſin, the ſin of ſins, and in ſome ſort the only ſin of the world. Men commonly think murder, adultery, theft, drunkenneſs to be very hainous ſins, and ſo indeed they be, but unbelief far worſe; for it is the mother of theſe, and all other evils. Take all the ſins that ever were committed againſt any of Gods juſt laws, and none is like to this, no greater ſin can be laid to ones charge than to refuſe wil-

wilfully, and trample under foot the Son of God. Chriſt promiſes *to ſend his Spirit, the Comforter into the world, and he ſhall convince the world of ſin, becauſe they believe not on him*, Joh. 16. 9. he means this ſin alone (ſaith *Auſtin*) as if not believing in the Son of God were the only ſin: Indeed it is the main and maſter-ſin. O beloved, little do you think, who daily ſit under the Miniſtry, unwrought on by the Word of God, what a grievous and fearful ſin you commit, and dreadful guilt you carry home with you, in neglecting from day to day ſo great Salvation, in forſaking your own mercy, and in judging your ſelves unworthy of everlaſting life, when Jeſus Chriſt this moſt precious gift is offered to you, by chuſing rather to cleave to a luſt, than to Chriſt bleſſed for ever; and rather to wallow in the mire and mud of earthly riches and ſwiniſh pleaſures, than to receive this moſt pleaſant and excellent gift; rather to caſt away your time in idleneſs, pride, worldlineſs and ſenſuality, than in ſeeking after this tranſcendent favour; rather make choice of a life made up of drunkenneſs, whoredoms, railing at godlineſs.

The greatneſs of this ſin appears in this, that it is moſt directly and diametrically oppoſite to the moſt fundamental Doctrine and command of the Goſpel; the primary and principal command of Chriſt, is to believe in Jeſus Chriſt, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. When the Jaylor being ſadly convinced, cryed out to the Apoſtles, *Sirs, what ſhall I do to be ſaved?* they anſwered him, *Act.* 16. 31.

Believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved: Not to believe, is accounted by God notorious diſobedience, and horrid gainſaying, *Rom.* 10. *ult.* In the Law, God ſtrictly requires obedience to his juſt precepts, *Do this and live*; by doing theſe things thou ſhalt ſave thy ſelf from hell; but no man living being able to purchaſe Heaven at this rate, by Chriſt he takes off this yoke, ſo that if they will but believe on his Son, they ſhall not be condemned by the Law: and thus he treats men: Since thou canſt not fully obey my Law, nor ſatisfie my Juſtice, I'le give thee my Son, who ſhall do all for thee, through whoſe perfect obedience thy imperfections may be remitted and healed, only thou muſt believe in him; and if thou wilt do but this one thing for thy ſoul, all thy ſins ſhall be pardoned, thou ſhalt be received into favour, adopted for my Son; and in thy obedience to the reſt of my commands, I'le accept the will for the deed; though thou canſt not perform ſuch perfect obedience as thou ſhouldeſt, yet if thou labour to do what thou canſt, I'le help thee with ſtrength from Heaven, bear with unallowed infirmities, *&c.*

'Tis a ſin againſt light and much knowledg, a ſin againſt love and ſpecial mercies, it binds all a mans other ſins upon him, it puts and keeps him under the guilt of all his ſins: *Infidelitate manente maneat peccatum omne*; he that lives in unbelief dies in his ſins; it makes a mans actions though moral, and ſpiritual, be ſinful, be a man never

never so holy and devout, do or suffer never so much, none of these, nor all, nor whatever can be named or imagined, God will not be pleased with them; for without faith 'tis impossible to please God; yea, 'tis a sin that defiles all a mans outward enjoyments, and temporal good things. To them that are unbelieving, nothing is pure, wife, children, house: In a word, 'tis the height and perfection of madness to refuse Christ; *Quis nisi mentis inops, &c.* Heaven and earth may be astonished, Angels and all Creatures may justly stand amazed at this prodigious sottishness, and monstrous madness.

5. If you refuse Christ, you utterly undo your own souls for ever; if ye miss of this gift, ye must expect nothing but misery here, and eternal damnation hereafter: For there is no name under heaven, by which you can be saved. Whatever your formalities be, how fair soever ye carry in the eye of the world, let your profession be never so plausible, 'tis Christ alone that can save you. If you will accept of the Lord Jesus Christ, you are in the suburbs of Heaven, there is but a thin wall between you and the land of Praises, ye are within an hours sailing of the shore of the new *Canaan*; when death digs a little hole in the wall, and takes down the sails, you have no more to do, but set your foot down in the fairest of created Paradises; but if you will not accept of Christ, let me tell you the truth, you are in the suburbs of Hell, there is but the cutting of a small thred, and

you have your portion with hypocrites and unbelievers.

1. By refuſing Chriſt, you do no leſs than put and fix your ſelves in the ſtate of condemnation. Let not this be accounted as a harſh cenſure of my own head, for 'tis the Scipture, *Joh.* 3. 18. *He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already:* and the reaſon this ſentence is paſt upon ſuch, is becauſe they believe not on the only begotten Son of God, and the wrath of God abides on them, *Joh.* 3. 36. We are all loſt in *Adam*, and if it be the office of Chriſt to ſave them that are loſt, they do worthily abide in death who refuſe him and his Salvation.

2. This ſin of refuſing Chriſt, this very ſin will e're long bring you actually into the place of condemnation, whence there is no return. What ſhall we be damned? No, far be it from me to pronounce the ſentence of condemnation upon the worſt of men; but this you may be aſſured of, that if you live and die without Chriſt, your portion will be in utter and everlaſting darkneſs, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 12. *That they all might be damned that believed not the truth*, &c. *Jeſus Chriſt will be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels*, 2 Theſ. 1. 7, 8, 9. and take your lot with them, *Rev.* 21. 8. The unbelieving ſhall have their portion in the lake of fire and brimſtone, the very worſt place in Hell, *Luke* 12. 48.

To ſay nothing of Temporal Judgments, anſwer me this queſtion, *Iſa.* 33. 14. *Who among you can dwell with everlaſting burnings?*

The time will come, when you ſhall remember what the Miniſter ſaid, O how fain would he have had me to eſcape theſe torments, how earneſtly did he entreat me! With what love and tender compaſſion did he beſeech me! how did his bowels earn over me! yet I did but make a jeſt of it, and hardened my heart againſt all! how glad would he have been after all his ſtudies, prayers, and pains, if he could have perſwaded me cordially to accept Chriſt, he would have thought himſelf well recompenced for all his labours, he would have laid his hands under my feet, and have fallen down on his knees to beg of me obedience to his meſſage; and all the entreaties of Miniſters are the entreatings of God. O how long did he wait! how freely did he offer! how lovingly did he invite! how importunately did he ſolicite! how long did Chriſt ſtand knocking at my door, crying, open to me, ſinner: why ſinner, are thy luſts and pleaſures better than me? is earth better than heaven? why then doſt thou delay or deny? wilt thou not be made clean, when ſhall it once be? O that thou wouldeſt hearken to my voice, and obey my Goſpel! O that they were wiſe! As one that is loath to take a denial, would not be repulſed. O how would he have gathered thee, and thou wouldeſt not! ſhall the God of heaven and earth follow thee in vain from one

place to another? Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? I would not have you periſh. If you go on with your refuſal of Chriſt, you may expect that the helliſh gnawing of conſcience for this one ſin, will hold ſcales with all the united horrour of all the reſt; you will then cry out, O fools and ideots that we were, when we refuſed ſo excellent a gift, ſo bleſſed a Saviour! we could then ſee no beauty in him, nor comelineſs wherefore we ſhould deſire him; but now how fair and glorious is he, whom we ſee upon the white Throne! how deſirable is his Sacred Majeſty! O how amiable is his countenance! how doth he ſhine with incomparable ſplendor, above the brightneſs of ten thouſand Suns? What wrong have we done our own ſouls, that we have deprived of ſo beautiful and delightful an object, as this moſt ſweet and glorious Saviour? If now we had time and leave to make our choice, we would prefer the enjoyment of him, (whom we once contemned) before ten thouſand worlds. But alas we cannot, the term of mercy is expired, and the time of juſtice, wrath, and vengeance, ſo much ſpoken of by our faithful Paſtors, is now come, and now we muſt be judged to the eaſeleſs, endleſs, and remedileſs torments of the infernal pit. And all our pleaſures and delights are gone; O that we had never been born; O that we had been ſo happy as our horſes or ſwine, which die but once, and feel no more pain for ever; whereas we muſt be ever dying, and never free from pain and miſery. Wo, wo, wo unto us, that ever

we

we were born to ſee this day, and to die this death, and to live this life, which will be a never dying death. We that accounted ſuch an one a preciſe fool, for his care to receive and improve this gift of God, ſhall groan out this ſad complaint, in the anguiſh of our ſpirits: This was he whom we had ſometimes in deriſion, and a Proverb of reproach; we fools counted his life madneſs, and his end to be without honour: now he is numbred among the Children of God, and his lot is among the Saints. Therefore we have erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteouſneſs hath not ſhined upon us; and as for the way of the Lord we have not known it. What hath pride profited us? or what good have riches with our vanity brought us? all theſe things are paſſed by as a ſhadow, and as a Poſt that haſts away. O with what infinite horrour and reſtleſs anguiſh, will this conceit rent the heart in pieces, and gnaw up the conſcience, when he conſiders in hell, that he hath loſt heaven for a luſt, and Chriſt for a meer ſhadow! whereas he might at every Sermon, had even the Son of God his own for the very taking, and with him for ever unſpeakable joy and glory; yet then neglecting ſo great Salvation, muſt now be crying out therefore againſt himſelf, as the moſt raging *Bedlam* that ever breath'd, lye down in unquenchable flames, without remedy, eaſe or end.

Whereas all thoſe that now accept of Chriſt, ſhall while they live, when they die, and for ever

ever cry out with the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 9. 15. *Thanks be to God for his unſpeakable gift.*

2. Second Branch of Inſtruction and Exhortation, Such as have received this gift of God muſt make it their care and buſineſs to retain and keep him. *Buy the truth but ſell it not*, Prov. 23. 23. *Remember how thou haſt received, and hold faſt*, Rev. 3. 3. This was the exemplary wiſdom and care of the Church, *Cant.* 3. 4. *I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mothers houſe, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.* She came by him hardly, and therefore ſhe will not part with him lightly; it coſt her dear to find him, ſhe ſought him up and down with tears and pains, and returns with many a *non inventus*, yet at laſt got him with much hazard and danger, much loſs and ſuffering, and therefore having found him whom her ſoul loved, ſhe would by no means part with him, nor leave him for the greateſt advantages in the world; ſhe knew well that nothing under heaven could countervail the loſs of him, nothing in this wide univerſe, though never ſo lovely and deſirable, could be equivalent to ſuch a jewel, all the treaſures upon earth could not bear proportion to him, nor make reparation for the loſs of him. I know the true Believer ſhall never loſe Chriſt, becauſe Chriſt will never ſuffer him to be loſt; but he may do that which may tend to the loſing of him, though through grace he ſhall not be actually loſt; and he may do that which may deprive him utter-

utterly of the ſenſe, evidence and comfort of this gift, though his propriety in it remain firm and ſure. 'Tis true, a Saint ſhall never be left ſo to himſelf, or his ſin, as that ſin ſhall bereave him of his jewel, his Chriſt, but may and often doth ſteal away the key of his cabinet, his evidence and aſſurance, *Cant.* 5. 5, 6. *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himſelf and was gone.* Thus you ſee Chriſt ſometimes withdraws himſelf from them that dearly love and earneſtly deſire him; for as he is ſaid (when pleaſed, to gratifie his people with his grace and aſſiſtance, ſtrength and deliverance) to come out of heaven his dwelling place, *Iſa* 26. *ult.* and 64. 1. So he is ſaid to return thither, when he forbears to put forth and exerciſe his grace, and to ſhew his mercy and loving kindneſs to them, *Hoſ.* 5. *ult. Iſa.* 18. 4. he is ſaid to hide his face in regard of his ſpecial grace and love, and in regard of intercourſe and communion with his Church, not totally, but in part; not finally and for ever, but for a moment; a ſmall moment, he ſhortens his hand in his wonted operations, and ceaſeth to be ſo intimate and familiar with his ſervants, and ſeems to be a ſtranger to them and their condition, and this he does for divers good reaſons and conſiderations.

1. Chriſt leaves them ſometimes, becauſe they will not open to him, when he knocks at the door of their hearts, either they are not at leaſure, or buſied about other matters and em-

employments, or are too much ſetled upon their lees; ſloath and ſecurity hath ſeized upon them, *Cant.* 5. 2, 3, 4.

2. He does it for tryal, that he may make an experiment of his Churches love to him, and faithfulneſs in his ſervice; to ſee whether his people can abide to be without him, or will ſerve and follow him, frowning as well as ſmileing. As a Father may leave his dear Child, and ſtand behind the door, to ſee what it will do: So God exerciſed *Job*, *David*, *Heman*, *Aſaph*, and others; the Wife is tryed in the long abſence of her Husband.

3. To raiſe and quicken them more to love and deſire him; for though the abſence of fuel doth diminiſh the fire, yet commonly the abſence of Lovers doth increaſe and heighten love, and makes it more impatient and reſtleſs, *Cant.* 5.8. This made the Spouſe ſick of love, and her ſoul failed, ſhe could not bear it. *Iſa.* 26. 9, *With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night.*

4. To cure formality in believers, and to remove all truſting to, reſting in, or relying on any thing beſides himſelf, and that the ſoul may not be ſatisfied with any thing below himſelf: As a Father ſometimes lets go his hold, that the Child may ſee his dependance upon him.

The Children of *Iſrael* were exceedingly formalized in their Devotion, they only looked at the external Sacrifices, but did not frame their doings to turn unto God, *Hoſ.* 5 6. Therefore he takes this courſe with them, *They ſhall*

go

go with their flocks, and with their herds to ſeek the Lord, but they ſhall not find him: He hath withdrawn himſelf from them, *i. e.* they ſhall go after their accuſtomed manner of ſacrifices; but God hides himſelf, becauſe he will bring them off their formality and ſecurity. So if we truſt in outward Ordinances, and lay too much ſtreſs upon them, the time may come when we ſhall uſe them, and ſeek God in them, and not find him, becauſe of formality.

5. That he may teach them to live by faith, not to be too much dejected, but believe that he is near to them, but behind the Wall, *Cant.* 2. 8, 9. He is kept off from the ſoul by the wall of ſenſe and carnal reaſon, that the ſoul may improve his faith in looking over this wall, as *Job* did, *Job* 19. 25, 26, *I know that my redeemer lives*, &c. Iſa. 50. 10, *He will come and will not tarry.*

6. That his preſence may be more eſteemed and valued when re-injoyed; there is often a remiſneſs and abatement in love to Chriſt, but when he is loſt and found again, we ſhall watch better over our ſelves, and ſet a higher price on him than before: we have need ſometimes to be taught the worth of mercies by the want of them (*poſt frigora dulcior ignis*) when we know what it is to want his preſence, we learn to eſteem it. (*Poſt tempeſtatem dulcior ſecuritas*) How ſweet is a calm after a ſtorm! Chriſts favourable Aſpect, is more ſweet and acceptable when the ſun-ſhine thereof begins to

to break forth again, after ſome black and bitter tempeſt of deſertion. Now ſince there is ſome danger of loſing Chriſt in theſe reſpects, we had need look to our ſelves, and do all we can to retain him with us for our help: I ſhall lay down ſome motives, and then directions, as in the firſt branch.

1. To perſwade us to this, I ſhall uſe no other arguments or motives, but only to tell you what Chriſt is to the ſoul, and ſo it may ſee what it deprives it ſelf of by loſing him.

1. Keep him, for he is thy life; *Whoſo findeth him, findeth life*, Prov. 8. 35, and 3. 18, *She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is every one that retaineth her*; ſpeaking of wiſdom, under which notion Chriſt is commended to us. So *Prov.* 4. 13. *Take faſt hold of inſtruction, let her not go, keep her, for ſhe is thy life.* He ſaith, I am thy life, and the length of thy days, with him is the fountain of life; he is the only well-ſpring of life, and all bleſſedneſs. How ſweet is life! skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life, he'l part with any thing, every thing rather than life. When many of Chriſts followers forſook, and walked no more with him; *Will ye alſo forſake me*, ſaid he to his Apoſtles? *Peter* anſwered for himſelf and the reſt, *Lord, whither ſhall we go, thou haſt the words of eternal life*, Joh. 6. 68. *q.d.* Lord if we leave thee, we leave our life and all our comfort, we forſake our own mercy, and judg our ſelves unworthy of everlaſting life; had

had we no other reaſon, 'tis motive enough to ſtay with thee and keep cloſe with thee, to conſider that our lives are hid in thee, eternal life, and conſequently all that's dear to us, the quinteſſence of all happineſs is with thee.

2. Keep him for he is thy light; how ſad and miſerable is it to walk in darkneſs? if you let Chriſt go, you eclipſe your own light; 'tis night when Chriſt is gone, who is the only Sun of Righteouſneſs, his life is the light of men, *Joh.* 14. 5, 9. he ſaith of himſelf, *Joh.* 8. 12. *I am the light of the world, he that followeth me ſhall not walk in darkneſs, but ſhall have the light of life, that lights men to heaven, to eternal light and life.*

In the dark thou art in danger of miſtaking thy friend for thy foe, and thy foe for thy friend. *Job* took God for his enemy in his dark and diſmal ſtate, and Satan may transform himſelf into an Angel of light, and wofully deceive thee.

Beſides, he that walks in darkneſs is in danger of two evils: 1. Of falling into ſin, into ſome dirty diſtemper, luſt, or other; if a man walks in darkneſs without a guide, he knows not whether he goes, *Joh.* 12. 35. he is apt to ſtumble and fall. 2. Of declining into error, no better way to eſcape wandring into ways of error, and by-paths of Hereſie, than to keep cloſe to Chriſt, *holding faſt the head,* Col. 2. 19. O then keep Chriſt.

3. He is thy rock and refuge, all thy ſafety is in him, *the Lord is a ſun and a ſhield,* Pſal. 84.

and

and wilt thou in the open field in the midſt of thy mortal enemies, ſtrip thy ſelf of thy beſt armour, and leave thy ſelf naked and expoſed, by letting go Chriſt, who is thy buckler and defence, *Whoſe name is a ſtrong tower, unto which the righteous flee and are ſafe?*

O do not part with thy Sheild whatever comes, that was it Soldiers in old time ſtuck to above all, and would loſe their life rather than it. When Satan, the Fleſh and the World, ſet upon thee, all armed foes, wilt thou not take unto thee, and keep this armour of God? *Pſal.* 27. 5, In the time of trouble he ſhall hide thee in his Pavilion, and in the ſecret of his Tabernacle ſhall he hide thee; he ſhall ſet thee up upon a Rock: enter into this Rock, and hide thy ſelf in the clefts of this Rock, he will keep him in perfect peace whoſe mind is ſtayed on him, becauſe he truſteth in him; the Lord *Jehovah* is the Rock of ages, *Iſa.* 26. 3, 4.

4. He is thy ſtrength, the ſap and principle of activity and fruitfulneſs; without him thou can bear no fruit, do nothing. *Joh* 15. 4, 5, *For as the branch cannot bear fruit of it ſelf, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me, and I in you: Without me you can do nothing* that is ſpiritually good and acceptable to God. *I am like a green fir-tree, from me is thy fruit found,* Hoſ. 14. 8. While Chriſt is in the Soul, it is exceeding active, vigorous and nimble, kept above ſloth

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and ſluggiſhneſs; but when he withdraws himſelf, how dull and unactive is the ſoul, and barren, unprofitable! 'tis Winter with it. He is thy ſtrength, how weak and poor is the ſoul without Chriſt! the ſmalleſt corruption is too hard for, and will over wreſtle the ſtrongeſt Chriſtians without Chriſt; he is the ſtrength of *Iſrael*, 1 *Sam.* 15. 29. We are without ſtrength; *Rom.* 5. 6, but in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength, *Iſa.* 45. 24. Chriſt is the ſtrength of his heart, and his portion for ever, *Pſal.* 73. 25 and therefore he ſhould ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, &c.* Will you that have ſuch great work to do, ſo heavy burdens to bear, let go your ſtrength?

5. He is thy glory and excellency; the beauty of a Chriſtian is in Chriſt; he defaceth and debaſeth himſelf, if he let go Chriſt. *Iſa.* 60. 19, *The Lord ſhall be unto thee an everlaſting light; and thy God, thy glory.* When a mans glory is gone, what remains? he hath nothing but what he is aſhamed of. Prov. 4. 7, 8, 9, *Wiſdom is the principal thing, therefore get wiſdom; and withal thy getting, get underſtanding. Forſake her not, and ſhe ſhall preſerve thee; love her, and ſhe ſhall keep thee; exalt her, and ſhe ſhall promote thee; ſhe ſhall bring thee to honour when thou doſt embrace her, ſhe ſhall give to thine head an ornament of grace: A crown of glory ſhe ſhall deliver to thee.* So that when Chriſt is gone, the Crown of our

head is fallen; he is our garment, not only for ornament but uſe, *Rom.* 13. *ult.* Put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Iſa.* 61. 10, he is a garment of ſalvation, and robe of righteouſneſs.

6. He is thy meat, thy food, therefore keep him, *Joh.* 6. 35, 51, *I am the bread of life, he that cometh unto me ſhall never hunger, and he that believeth on me ſhall never thirſt.* A body may be better without meat, than a ſenſible ſanctified ſoul without Chriſt. A dead body may be long enough without, but a living body cannot endure long without ſuſtenance: if thou be a living Soul, O never part with thy meat, but eat that which is good, and let thy ſoul delight it ſelf in fatneſs. No ſooner does a man ceaſe from feeding, but he immediately declines and dies. If you could imagine a Believer broken off from Chriſt, and drawing no nouriſhment from him for one moment, what a withering dying perſon would he be? O Sirs, the life, ſtrength, fruitfulneſs, and comfort, yea, your all is in Chriſt, and ſecured by your holding him; if that fail all would fail.

7. He is thy heat; as the Sun is for the heat, as well as for the light of the world: What a cold frozen world would it be were it not for the Sun? what a cold ſeaſon does its further diſtance from us cauſe in our Horizon? but the nearer the Sun is to us, the greater the heat, as in Summer: if thy ſoul have

have not Chriſt to warm thee, thou wilt be ſtarved to death. *If two lie together, then they have heat; but how can one be warm alone, Eccleſ.* 4.—11? How can thy ſoul be warm, if Chriſt be departed from thee? O what a chilling coldneſs comes on the Soul, when Chriſt goes away! what aguiſh fits and ſtarving coldneſs ſeizes on the whole Soul, and every grace, when this Sun draws in its beams and influences! at the beſt there will be a *Laodicean* lukewarmneſs.

8. Chriſt is thy health, and one that underſtands himſelf, will let go any thing rather than health; for that's the marrow and ſweetneſs of all other comforts of life. Wiſdom is health or medicine to all fleſh, *Prov.* 4. 22, and 3. 8, it ſhall be health to thy Navel, and marrow to thy Bones. It is the watering, moiſtneſs, and fatneſs of the Soul; Chriſt is as neceſſary for health to the Soul that's ſick and wounded, as Medicine for the ſick, and a Plaiſter for the wounded body; the Soul cannot be ſound without him. So long as you preſerve him, you'l be ſtrong and ſound; ſtrong to do, and ſtrong to ſuffer; but if you loſe him, you'l be no better than *Sampſon*, when his ſtrength was departed from him, *Judg.* 16. 19. What is cutting off the hair to divulſion and ſeparation from your head?

9. He is thy heritage; ſo the Church accounted him, *Lam.* 3. 24, *The Lord is my portion ſaith my ſoul:* not only her tongue, but

her very heart takes him and ſpeaks him her heritage; and *David*, *The Lord is my portion, and my inheritance. The lines are fallen to me in pleaſant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage*, Pſal 16. 5, 6 Say with *Naboth*, *God forbid that I ſhould give away the inheritance of my Fathers.* That was only for life, this is everlaſting; a never fading, ever-flouriſhing inheritance: that ſubject to many hazards, fire, inundation, robbery, blaſting, and many caſualties, yea, to utter loſs, as the end declared; but this is above all ſuch danger and detriment. O be not ſo fooliſh and ſottiſh, as to part with this for all the world.

10. He is thy happineſs; keep him for thy chief good: that that can alone give contentment to thy immortal Soul, is bound up in him. *Happy is every one that retaineth him*, Prov. 3. 18. *O terq; quaterq; beati, &c.* Infinitely and for ever bleſſed, that receive and retain Jeſus Chriſt, *Prov.* 8. *ult. Prov* 3. 3. Happy is the man that findeth wiſdom; he is thy all, and wilt thou part with all at once? Thou art like to have a ſad time of it; when Chriſt goes, farewell joy, and peace, and comfort, and all that's good.

2. For direction, *1ſt.* In what manner,

2d. By what means, may the Soul keep Chriſt.

Firſt, For the manner of holding and keeping this gift:

1. He

1. He must be kept in our Heads; though that is not enough: a full and distinct understanding of him is well; but a knowledg, a meer notion in the brain, of Christ, is but a sorry keeping; you must provide Christ a better place to lodg in, or he will not tarry with you. Must Christ be in the head, when Sin and Satan is in the heart? If Christ have no room in thee but the head, he is indeed no where.

2. In our Mouths; we must confess with the mouth, yet that neither is sufficient; 'tis too open a room, and leaking a vessel to hold this gift in; to speak and talk of Christ, and take his blessed name into our lips, when our hearts are far from him, and lives deny him, is but a poor keeping of Christ; if there be nothing left of Christ but what hangs on the lips, he is indeed departed already.

3. Keep him we must in our Houses and Societies; woe unto that place when Christ departs from them, when he removes his Candlesticks out of their place, and takes away his holy Ordinances; but alas! to have Christ in publick ordinances, and not in our hearts, will not serve the turn.

4. We must keep him in our Hearts; not in the hall of the senses, but in the closet of the heart; let him dwell and reign in our understanding, will, affections and memory; think on him continually, love him dearly, delight in him at all times. As *Artemesia* did ever

carry in her mind her dear deceaſed Husband *Mauſeolus*, mingling her very drink with his aſhes; ſo let us bear Chriſt about with us in the veſſels of our hearts, mingling our meat, drink, words and works with his ſweeteſt remembrance: So the Spouſe did, *Cant.* 3. 4. *I would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mothers houſe; and the chamber of her that conceived me.* Which place according to the conſent of beſt Expoſitors, is to be underſtood, either of the Church of God, in her publick Congregations, which is the Mother of us all; or elſe of the ſanctified Heart and Conſcience, which is the dwelling-place of Chriſt, of which he hath ſaid, *Here will I reſt, and I will dwell in the heart of the contrite*, Iſa. 57. 15, and there we ſhould lay him up by Faith: If the head be for the world, yet let Chriſt have the heart.

5. Keep him, not only by way of a holy and perpetual recordation of him in our minds and hearts; but alſo by a conſtant and continued care, and unwearied diligence, to preſerve and injoy the comfortableneſs and feeling of his gracious preſence in your own Souls; imitating herein the fair Spouſe, who when ſhe had found him, would by no means let him go; but compelled him by a grateful violence to ſtay with her: this was one end why he hid himſelf for ſome time from her. *Primus non inveniendus quæritur, ut poſt inventus ſtrictius teneatur.* Thus *Jacob* held him by force

force, and wreſtled hard for his bleſſing, and would not let him go till he had bleſſed him; but when he had obtained that, he ſuffered him to depart: but we ſhould never leave him, no not when he hath bleſſed us, as prizing him more than any thing he can beſtow. *Nolo benedictionem tuam ſed te*, ſo muſt we prize more his perſon, than his bleſſings.

2. The way and means to keep him:

1. Leave all for him, retire from the world to injoy him; ſay of all other things, when thou haſt found Jeſus of *Nazareth*, let theſe go their way. Make him a bed in thy Soul whereon he may reſt, that is, ſweet thoughts and meditations on him, and complacency in him; *Cant.* 3. 7, *Behold his bed, which is Solomons. Solomoni ergo (vel Chriſto) lectulum facimus* (ſaith *Gregory*) *cum a mundi ſolicitudinibus omnino ceſſamus, dum in ſolo deciderio Chriſti libenter pauſamus, eiq; ut nobiſcum pauſet, cor ab omni terrena cupiditate mundamus.* The beauty and riches of every member of the Church, is reſembled to the wealth and ſplendor of *Solomons* Bed, wherein Chriſt reſts in his love: Be careful to keep your thoughts (amongſt all worldly affairs) free for Chriſt. Religion (and ſo Chriſt) loves to lye in clean Sheets. Go to them that want Chriſts gracious preſence, conſult their experiences, and they will tell you, that their worldly affairs have ſo diſtracted their thoughts, that Chriſt is not

there; and as their worldly cares and riches increaſed upon them, the further diſtance hath Chriſt been from them. Some, while poor and low in the world, have felt much more of the ſweetneſs of communion with Chriſt, than when they grew richer and full of cares. O! who would not be content to take leſs of the world, that they might have more of Chriſt.

2. Never leave him, take heed of withdrawing from Chriſt, ſtick cloſe to him, keep him company, and he will ſtay with you. As you do with a friend whoſe ſtay you deſire, ſo deal with Chriſt; be much in his company, in prayer, reading, hearing, meditating, and all holy duties; be ambitious of more intimate communion with him; dayly increaſe ſweet acquaintance, and humble familiarity with Chriſt.

1. Be willing to be much with Chriſt in Prayer, talking and conferring with him, as freely, frequently, and familiarly, as the Bride with her Bridegroom, (*Cant.* 5. 1, *I am come into my garden, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe*, ſaith Chriſt; *q. d.* It was thy hearty deſire, O my dear Spouſe, that I ſhould come into this pleaſant Garden; for thou ſaidſt, *Let my beloved come into his garden*, (Cant. 4. 16.) and now lo here I am, to anſwer the longing expectation of thy bleſſed Soul, which doth even pant and thirſt after me, who am the health of thy countenance, and thy God, *Pſal.* 42. 11. My company thou

thou doſt affect, I ſee 'tis moſt ſweet and pleaſant to thee, and my company thou ſhalt have, here I am to be with thee as thou didſt pray and deſire; I come to eat thy pleaſant fruits, and bring with me the inexpreſſible comforts of my Spirit, do thou eat and drink; *Yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.*

2. Be willing to be with him in reading much and often in the book of God, where thou maiſt find this precious pearl as in a field; what elſe (ſaith the Prince of *Anhalt*) is the whole Scripture, but the ſwadling-clothes of the child Jeſus? the Apoſtle, *Col.* 3. 16. right well terms the word of God the word of Chriſt, becauſe he is the matter of the whole, and the contents of all the Bible; ſhadowed in the Law, and ſhewed in the Goſpel, *Unam vocem habent duo Teſtamenta*; the word of the Lord contains nothing but the word, which is the Lord. *Auſtin.* How vainly do men look for immediate inſpirations, when ordinary means is afforded; and others forbid the reading of the Scriptures, and call Pictures and Images Lay mens books?

3. Be willing to be with him in the Communion of Saints, *Who are a garden incloſed*, Cant. 4. 12. in which Chriſt doth ſhew himſelf moſt graciouſly by their ſavoury ſpeeches, and holy converſations, emblematizing and repreſenting in a proportionable degree that moſt admirable raviſhing fairneſs and pleaſantneſs that is in Chriſt himſelf! let theſe then be the excellent ones of the earth, in whom is all your delight,

Pſal.

Pſal. 16. 3. Attend his Ordinances, which are the conduits to convey Chriſt to us; though others pretend to be above them, yet keep ye under them if ye would keep Chriſt; to put the pitcher above the rock is not the way to take water. O let your fellowſhip be with the Father and with the Son.

3. Shake off ſloth, eaſe and ſecurity; indulge not your ſelves, love not your carnal eaſe, be not drunken with the pleaſures of the fleſh, nor ſurfeit with the profits of the world, nor intoxicated with pomp and honours; ſet not your affections on things below, let not down your watch, be not ſecure nor high-minded, *Rom.* 3. 3. *Cant.* 5. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. you have there Chriſt knocking at the door of her heart, with importunity, and tender vehemency; for admiſſion, and he moves and ſolicites, *Open my ſiſter, my ſpouſe, &c.* every word an argument, a talent weight of love; and does Chriſt, call and knock, and beg at the door of our ſouls to enter? O what vile ingratitude is it to ſhut him out! Doth he ſolicite and entreat ſo many ways by his Word and Ordinances, Rod, and admonitions, and motions of his Spirit, what inexcuſable obſtinate madneſs is it to drive him away? Is any thing ſo worthy to be harboured there as he? and is it not an incomparable honour that he ſhould vouchſafe to come under our roof? She aggravates her fault becauſe of his importunity. But obſerve her idle excuſes and vain frivolous pretences for not opening to him,

verſ.

verſ. 3. *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on?* What abſurd and ſluggiſh inconveniences does ſhe plead? making that her apology which ſhould be her ſhame, in caſting off thoſe garments of holineſs, and ſpiritual duties which ſhould ever adorn her; and growing weary of her nuptial robes, which ſhe ſhould ever wear: And the other is like unto it, *I have waſhed my feet how ſhall I defile them?* This is ſpoken after the manner of thoſe hot Countries where they uſed to waſh conſtantly before they compoſed themſelves to a ſetled reſt, or before they ſat down to eat. By this cuſtom the Church would excuſe her ſomnolency and negligence, as if there were trouble or danger in riſing up to entertain him: Sad ſhifts! A Chriſtian ſhould endure more for Chriſt than a little cold, or unſeaſonable diligence. One ſpark of Hell will burn up all theſe cloaks and fair pretences.

In the fourth *verſe* Chriſt proceeds further, ſince knocking would not ſerve, outward means and moral arguments will not prevail, he works inwardly and effectually, by the powerful viſitations and motions of the Spirit, which is called the finger, *Mat.* 12. 28. compar'd with *Luk.* 11. 20. Then her bowels were moved in her, or for him. Here's the great effect of ſpiritual viſits of Chriſt, and the cloſe and lively workings of his Spirit in the heart; *then ſhe aroſe and her hands dropped with myrrh*; active and vigorous endeavours ſhould accompany inward motives and ſuggeſtions of grace; the feet ſhould make haſte,

and

and the hands be diligent and operative, for this is to oyl the lock, and make the ſoul dextrous and prompt to all duties of holineſs.

Verſ. 6. You have the effect of her ſloth: *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himſelf and was gone:* or *he was gone, he was gone*; which duplication is more paſſionate, and denotes the expedition and certainty of his abſence, for which ſhe is much troubled, and like a ſad widow, wrings her hands, and crys out *he is gone, &c.* my ſoul failed when he ſpake, or melted, or went out of me, for his words which he had uſed to me; I was exanimated and aſtoniſhed. O take heed of ſloth.

4. Hold faſt the word of truth, keep the myſtery of faith in a pure conſcience, and then you keep Chriſt. Take heed therefore of all Opinions that are oppoſite and deſtructive to the truths of Chriſt, he will not lodg where his truth is thruſt out by errours. What was it that brought ruin to the ancient Churches of *Greece*, but this? they gave way to fond opinions, ſome to *Jewiſh* fables, ſome to the Doctrine of *Balaam*, and of Devils, and of the *Nicholaitans*, as you read in the ſecond or third Chapter of *Revelation*, and Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory. Preſerve every truth of Chriſt according to its moment and weight; the duſt of Gold is precious; 'tis dangerous to be careleſs in the leſſer truths: *Better heaven and earth ſhould be blended together* (ſaith *Luther*) *than one duſt of Gods Truth ſhould periſh.* If you hearken to Satan and Seducers,

ducers, this will be a little one, and that ſhall be a little one, till you have little'd away all the principles of faith. Count not thoſe ſmall things (as the men of the world do) for which the children of God have ventured their all. Martyrs were not ſo prodigal of their lives, but they knew what they did when they durſt not give place for a moment. O beware of errour, if you would keep Chriſt; let men be in the eyes of the world, in righteouſneſs Saints, in holineſs Angels, in zeal like Chriſt himſelf: If damnable errours be the ground of their Catechiſms, and their opinions be heretical, they cannot keep Chriſt amongſt them, receive and retain his faithful Miniſters and Embaſſadors: *He that receiveth them receiveth me, and he that deſpiſeth them deſpiſeth me*, ſaith Chriſt, *Mat.* 10. 40 *Luk.* 10. 16. Will Chriſt ſtay where his ſervants are deſpiſed and contemned? no, the Kingdom of Heaven ſhall be taken from ſuch, *Mat.* 22. 43. he takes it as done to himſelf, *Mat.* 25. 40.

5. Be humble and fruitful, theſe may well be joined together; for humble ſouls like the low valleys watered with the dew of Grace, are moſt fruitful; he knows the proud afar off, and reſiſts the proud, but he gives grace to the humble, and dwells in ſuch ſouls. Barrenneſs under Ordinances provokes him to leave men, as the barren fig-tree, *Luk.* 13. 6, 7, 8, 9. If it will not bear fruit after it hath been dreſſed and watered, Chriſt gives over to plead for its ſtanding,

ding, and removes his preſence from it. He delights to walk in a fruitful garden, *Cant.* 4. *ult. Awake O Northwind, and come thou South, blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow forth. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleaſant fruits.*

Impart him to others, that's the way to have him; would you have Chriſt to ſtay with you, walk about with him, take him abroad, never come into any company but leave ſomething of Chriſt there; while you ſeek to ſhut him up in your ſelves, you loſe him. Say with the Spouſe, *Cant.* 7. 10, 11, 12. *Come my beloved, let us go forth into the fields, let us lodg in the villages, &c.*

Let your minds and mouths be ſeaſon'd with ſweet and holy conceptions, and expreſſions of him, to the glory of God, and edification of others; then will Chriſt walk with you, as he did with thoſe that were communing together of good things, *Luk.* 24. 15. Not bitter in cenſuring others, not waſting your time in idle diſcourſes, but uſe gracious ſpeeches, and ſavoury communications. In a word, commit all to him in a way of well doing, and he will not leave his charge; employ him, and while he hath any thing to do for you, he will not leave his work. Improve and make uſe of him, and he will abide with you. Beware of committing (and approving thy ſelf) in the leaſt ſin, or the leaſt compliance with it; ſay not as *Lot* of *Zoar*, *Is it not a little one?* Sin approved is that very *Delilah* that cuts off the locks, and makes the Believer

liever a prey to every *Philiſtine*. Sin is that which ſeparates between us and our God, the great make-bait between heaven and earth, *Iſa.* 59. 2. Sin is that which will ſoon grieve away *the holy Spirit by which you are ſealed to the day of Redemption*, Epheſ. 4. 30 O do not ſin willingly and knowingly againſt God, and do not abate in your conſtant and fervent performance of duty, for theſe things ſtrike at the union betwixt Chriſt and you, at the untying of the knot which God hath made ſo faſt; and if it ſhould once come to that, what would become of you? No ſooner is the branch broken off the root, but it immediately withers and dies; *For as the branch cannot bear fruit of it ſelf, except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye except you abide in me. He that abideth in me and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit*; for without me χωρὶς ἐμοῦ, ſeparated from me, ye can do nothing. You had need to uſe all holy means, whereby you may keep Chriſts ſpecial preſence with your ſouls; many evils will flow in upon that ſoul that lets go Chriſt, *Pſal.* 71. 11. God hath forſaken him, proſecute and take him; Satan will ſift you, ſin will foil you, afflictions be too heavy for you, and you are ſure to have worſe company when he goes, and you will be apt to depart from him. Chriſt is that to thee, that thy ſoul cannot be without, thy light, life, health, happineſs, thine all. Hell is heaven with Chriſt, and heaven is hell without him. *Mallem preſente Chriſto eſſe*

in

in inferno, quam abſente Chriſto in cœlo, ſaid *Luther.*

Third Branch of Exhortation, is to make uſe of this Gift of God. O improve him to the uttermoſt; 'tis not enough to have Chriſt, unleſs you uſe him. Not enough to have a Well of Salvation, but we muſt draw water and drink it too, if we intend a benefit by it, *Iſa.* 12. 3. ſo we muſt be always drawing, and drinking, and deriving good from Chriſt, as the branch makes the beſt of the root, and draws from it, as though it would exhauſt all its life and vertue. O that we could carry it ſo to Chriſt, even to draw from him, as though we would draw him dry, if ſuch a thing were poſſible. We have a ſaying in Philoſophy, *The nearer any thing comes to the firſt cauſe, the more abundantly doth it receive from it; as the nearer any thing is to the Sun, the more it participates of its light and heat.* Now you Believers are nigh unto Chriſt. (*In whom all fulneſs dwells,* Col. 1. 19.) You are even in him, and he in you. O what ſupplys of Grace ſhould you be fetching from him, upon all occaſions! Why do you not live under more conſtant, more free and full derivations from him? why ſhould ye want, or what ſhould you want, who are not only at the fountain, but in it? It's not enough for Chriſtians to have faith by which to live, but they muſt live by the faith which they have, *Gal.* 2. 20. *i.e.* They muſt by faith draw continual ſupplys of Grace,

Grace, comfort and ſtrength from Chriſt. 'Twas the looking to the Brazen Serpent that cur'd them them that were ſtung; 'tis drinking of water that quenches the thirſt, and eating the meat that ſatisfies the hungry. You then that have received Chriſt, and do keep him, make uſe and improvement of him; for though ſome gifts are only for laying up and looking at; yet this is both the excellency of Gods gift, and an encouragement to you for the performance of this duty; that he is for uſe, yea all for uſe and benefit to us. The great end for which he was given to us, is that we ſhould make uſe of him for our own good; God gave his Son to all Believers, that they by applying him, *might have life thorough him*, 1 *Joh.* 4. 9. *Joh.* 3. 16. As Chriſt is a publick perſon, which both adds much to the excellency of this gift, and gives great encouragement to us to make uſe of him; It ſhews his excellency: Heaven is an excellent thing becauſe publick, for 'tis obſerved, there is nothing in heaven, (that is the ſeat and element of happineſs) but it is common to all, of publick uſe and enjoyment. The inhabitants of that glorious place, the glorified Saints and Angels, all ſee the face of him that ſits on the Throne; they all drink of the water of life; all have acceſs to eat of the apples of the tree of life; there is no forbidden fruit in heaven; all have the bleſſing of the immediate preſence of the Lamb, and there is neither need of Sun nor Moon, nor light of candle to any; all equally enjoy Eter-

nity; there is one leaſe and term-day to the loweſt inhabitant of glory, as to the higheſt, and that is Eternity. There is common to all one City, the ſtreets whereof are tranſparent gold; that the pooreſt inhabitants of a place do all walk on ſtreets of gold of *Ophir*, is a great commendation of a City. 'Tis common to them all, that they ſhall never ſigh, never be ſad, never be ſick, never be old, never die; all feel the ſmell of the faireſt roſe that ever men or Angels heard of, or can imagine; the flower, the glory, the joy of Heaven, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. All walk in white, and can ſin no more; all have eternal life, fulneſs of joy and pleaſures for evermore. So Chriſt is a publick gift; all that truly believe may receive him, may keep him, may uſe him; though there be many thouſands of ſouls that are receiving from Chriſt, yet he is full enough to ſupply thy wants: though millions of ſouls employ him in the world, yet he is at leiſure to do thy work too, if thou employ him. All his offices and benefits are for thy uſe moſt properly, he is made, ordained, appointed and fitted unto us of God, *Wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. Is not a Redeemer of uſe for captives, a Saviour for ſinners, a Prieſt for offenders, a Prophet for the ignorant, a King to deliver ſuch as are in bondage, and to conquer and ſubdue oppreſſors? What is a Phyſician for, but for ſick perſons? Look on Chriſt in all his undertakings from firſt to laſt, he is for uſe; As particularly,

1. Where-

1. Wherefore did Chriſt empty himſelf and come into the world, was it not for ſinners, and will ſuch caſt him off and paſs him by as uſeleſs? Did he rent the heavens, and come down to thi earth on purpoſe to ſeek and ſave loſt ſinners, *Luk.* 19. 20. and 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. and will ye not now make uſe of him?

2. Wherefore was he made a Sacrifice, and laid down his life, and ſpilt his moſt precious blood, was it not for us? Meſſias was to be cut off, but not for himſelf, not for Angels, but for us; and did God give his Son to die for no uſe and purpoſe? is not he the good ſhepherd that giveth his life for his ſheep, that they may have life, and have it more abundantly, *Joh.* 10. 10. *He died that by his death he might reconcile us to God, when we were enemies*, Rom. 5. 10. *His blood was ſpilt to juſtifie us*, Rom. 5. 9. *He was delivered for our offences*, Rom. 4. 25. He paid a ranſome for us, and made ſatisfaction to divine juſtice in our nature and ſtead. *He gave himſelf for his Church*, (Epheſ. 5. 25, 26.) *that he might ſanctifie and cleanſe it with the waſhing of water, by his word, that he might preſent it to himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, that it might be holy and without blemiſh.* He died that he might kill ſin, which would be our death, and crucifie the old man, and to eſtabliſh a new Covenant, and open a way to Heaven; and ſhall all this be in vain? did Chriſt die as a fool dieth?

3. Wherefore did he riſe again from the dead?(was it not for our uſe and benefit?) *Rom.* 4. 25. *He roſe again for our juſtification*; that is, God did declare by raiſing him from the dead, that he hath accepted the death of his Son as of a ſufficient ranſome for our ſins; and he being our true pledg and ſurety, therefore having ſatisfied for us by his death, and returning again to life, gives us a clear evidence and firm argument, that God was fully reconcil'd, and life purchaſed for us; which aſſurance we could not have had if Chriſt our pledg had remained under the power of death; and ſhall not we make uſe of Chriſts Reſurrection to confirm our faith, that God is ſatisfied for us? He roſe again that he might quicken us to a new life, and ſhall we lye dead rather than improve?

4. What was the end of Chriſts Aſcenſion? was not that alſo for us, and our uſe and benefit, that then *he might lead captivity captive, and give gifts to men*, Epheſ. 4. 8. either paſſively, that Chriſt might take away from Satan, death and hell, and all their captives, and make them his happy captives; and ſhall ſuch a Redemption be refuſed? Or actively, that he might captivate the world, fleſh, devil, death and hell, which in ſeveral kinds had captivated mankind, and ſhall not we make uſe of him, for conquering ſuch enemies? He aſcended that he might give his Spirit, and confer the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, *Act.* 2. 16, 17. and that he might prepare

pare a place for us: And ſhall theſe great benefits be neglected?

5. Once more: Wherefore is he an Advocate, but to plead for us, when we dare not, cannot come to ſpeak for our ſelves? What a ſtrange piece of folly were it for a man that has a friend in the Court who is appointed purpoſely to plead his cauſe, or preſent his petition, and yet he make no uſe of him, when the ſucceſs of his buſineſs concerns his whole eſtate or life? when we have ſinned and offended God, we have Chriſt our advocate with the Father to interpoſe betwixt the blow of Juſtice and our guilty ſouls, and ſhall this priviledg be neglected? 1 *Joh.* 2. 1. If we want any thing that God hath laid up for us, he is ready to make interceſſion for us, who cannot be denied, *Heb* 7. 25. He muſt perfume all our Sacrifices, or they are not accepted; offer up all our Prayers, or they are not anſwered. What need had we then to make uſe of him? It is only by the blood of Chriſt that we have boldneſs or liberty to enter into the holy of holies, *Heb.* 10. 19. And *by him is a new and living way conſecrated for us that we may draw near with true hearts and full aſſurance of faith*, Heb. 10. 20, 22. And none can come unto the Father but by him. O then make uſe of this only name and way, and be often walking in it to God, and his Throne of Grace.

Object. *O but I am a wretched ſinner, a worthleſs worm and captive, what have I to do*

with such a precious Saviour, with so glorious a Lord?

Answ. But pray tell me, wherefore is Christ a Saviour? is he not for sinners? Wherefore is he a Redeemer? is it that he should lye by God as useless? was he not a Redeemer for Captives? Hath not God fitted and dressed Christ (as I may so speak) for sinners use and advantage? what if all the world should say so, Christ should be a Saviour and save none? a Redeemer and ransome none at all? an Advocate and plead for none? for all are sinners, all are captives, all are at enmity with God naturally. We have the more need to use him because such.

Now for Direction how we must make use of Christ:

1. As for the manner.

2. The particular cases wherein; 1. How or in what manner we may safely and comfortably make use of Christ.

1. Labour by all means to be acquainted with your spiritual condition; know the state of your souls; otherwise how canst thou make use of Christ suitably? As suppose thou hast a blind eye, or hard heart, how canst thou make use of Christ to open the one, or break the other, as thou ought, if thou knowest it not? as the Apostle saith in another case, 1 *Cor.* 11. 26. *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat, &c.* So here, examine whether thou hast received Christ, whether he be thine, before thou make use of

him

him; doth Chriſt belong to thee, or not? how canſt thou without trembling think of him or approach to him, when thou knoweſt not whether he will condemn or acquit thee in judgment? nor whether he be ſet for thy riſing, or thy fall? whether he be the corner-ſtone and foundation of thy happineſs, or a ſtone of ſtumbling, to break thee, and grind thee to powder? *Luk.* 2. 34. *Mat.* 21. 44. Take heed of uſurping that which belongs not to thee; do not ignorantly and preſumptuouſly conceit thy ſelf to improve Chriſt, before thou haſt received him; try thy ſtate to the bottom; hands off, prophane impenitent unbelievers, unreformed ſinners.

2. Get a due ſenſe of thy neceſſity and want of Chriſt; learn to look upon thy ſelf as altogether inſufficient as of thy ſelf to do any thing: What man is moſt likely to make uſe of Chriſt, what ſoul is in neareſt capacity to improve him, but he that knows he hath nothing, can do nothing without him? Will a man make uſe of a Phyſician that thinks he is not ſick? Will any intreat his neighbours hand to help him to do or lift that which he is perſwaded he hath ſtrength enough to do himſelf? So if thou have any work to do, as ſuppoſe to reſiſt Satan, ſubdue a corruption, and preſumeſt thou canſt do it thy ſelf; thou art uncapable of making uſe of Chriſt: as a King to ſuppreſs rebels, will not call in foreign aid, *&c.* So think not your ſelves to have any ſufficiency to do any thing that is

good, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. Empty your ſelves of ſelf-conceitedneſs; ſay not with *Laodicea*, *I am rich, and increaſed with goods*; but know what Chriſt ſaith, *Joh.* 15. 5. *Non ait, ſine me parum, poteſtis facere, ſed nihil.* Auſt. Not but little, but juſt nothing; you cannot think, or ſpeak, nor act in the leaſt meaſure agreeable to Gods perfect will, but by Chriſt: unbottom your ſelves wholly, caſt away ſelf-confidence, that you may be fit for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who *filleth the hungry with good things, and ſends the rich away empty*, Luk. 1. 53.

3. Apply Chriſt to thy ſelf in particular by faith, believing and being verily perſwaded that Chriſt is able and willing to do for thee, what thou needeſt, and what thou deſireſt in all thy exigencies; truſt him with thy work and buſineſs; and caſt thy ſelf upon him as thou wouldeſt do on a truſty, able, and faithful friend: as we are to receive Chriſt by faith, ſo by faith we make uſe of him; as we apply him for our juſtification, ſo we improve him for continuance of it, and for our Sanctification and Salvation.

1. Thus the ſervants of God have done and proſpered; they apply'd Chriſt in their ſeveral needs and exigencies, as *Job*, *David*, *Thomas* and *Paul*.

2. Thus the Scriptures direct, and perſwade us to appropriate Chriſt to our needing ſouls, ſo we are bid to put on Chriſt, *Rom.* 13. 14. *Taſte and ſee that he is gracious*, Pſal. 34. 8.

3. Thus

3. Thus Chriſt himſelf invites us to apply and improve him: *Come eat of my bread, and drink of my wine which I have mingled*, Prov. 9. 5. Come partake of thoſe good things my Father would have me to communicate unto you. *Iſa.* 55. 1. *Ho every one that thirſteth come ye to the waters, &c.* Joh. 7. 37. *If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink.* Mat. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* By theſe and ſuch like paſſages in Scripture, you ſee what warrant you have to apply Chriſt, and perſwade your ſelves, that if you make uſe of him, he will do for you that which ſhall be for your good. Chriſts call gives you a warrant to go to him, that you may poſſeſs theſe priviledges in Chriſt without intruſion or uſurpation; this is that you have to ſhew to Conſcience, you do not preſume: Why doſt thou, vile wretch, go to Chriſt for ſuch a bleſſing? how durſt thou that art a ſinner look him in the face? lay hold on Chriſt? make uſe of Chriſt? why? I was invited and called. If it ſhould be asked of the gueſts that came in a wedding garment, Friends, how durſt ye come hither and approach the Preſence-chamber of the Kings Son? they might anſwer, We were bidden to the Wedding, *Mat.* 22. 10, 12. The Scripture doth not call us by name, thou *John* and *Thomas*, though the offer be propounded generally, yet when God by his meſſenger ſpeaks directly to my caſe, and I am included, here's a diſh for my hungry ſoul, intended for me.

2. For

2. For particular caſes, wherein this gift may be very uſeful, as a Jeſus to ſave us from our ſins, *Matt.* 1. 21.

1. It is a tryed and effectual antidote againſt ſin, that's the greateſt evil in the world. Now improve Chriſt againſt the guilt, the ſtain, the temptation, the bondage, and the remainder of ſin.

1. Againſt the guilt of ſin; wouldeſt thou have pardon, make uſe of Chriſt, who hath ſhed his blood to ſatisfie infinite Juſtice, and purchaſe pardon and remiſſion of thy ſins, if thou believe in him, 1 *Pet.* 2. 24, 25. He hath born them on his body on the Croſs, Therefore, as the Apoſtle, 1 *Joh.* 2. 12, *theſe things I write unto you, that ye ſin not; and if any man ſin, we have an advocate with the father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, who is a propitiation for our ſins, and not for ours only, but the ſins of the whole world.* If thou haſt ſinned againſt God, and guilt pleads againſt thee, and thou haſt nothing to plead for thy ſelf, thou maiſt go to this Advocate, who will intercede for thee, by vertue of his merits; and ſo thou maiſt ſcape the Judgment of God denounced againſt thee, *Ezek.* 18 4, *The ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall dye.* O apply the blood of Chriſt, and ſprinkle that upon thy Conſcience, that thy ſins may be blotted out, when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord, he will heal thy bleeding wounds, and drown the cry of thy ſins.

2. Againſt

2. Againſt the ſtain of ſin, to purge and cleanſe thee; Doſt thou find thy Soul ſtained with original and actual pollutions, ſo that thou cryeſt out, I am unclean, I am unclean, *I was born in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me*; and innumerable evils committed by me, do leave a *macula*, or ſtain upon me? O then, fly to Chriſt, who is a fountain ſet open to waſh from ſin and from uncleanneſs, *Zech.* 13. 1. *Who is the Lamb of God, that takes away the ſins of the world*, John 1. 29. Chriſt was without ſpot, knew no ſin, was born holy, that he might cover the impurity of thy conception. Hath ſin like a poiſon or leproſy ſpread over thy whole Soul, and all thy actions are impure, ſo that there is no ſoundneſs in thee, but wounds, and bruiſes, and putrifying ſores? Improve Chriſt in this caſe, who will waſh thee in his blood, *Rev.* 1. 5, bind up thy wounds, and make thee partaker of the Divine nature; as 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. *Though thy ſins be as ſcarlet, he will make thee white as ſnow. If the blood of bulls and goats, ſprinkling the unclean, ſanctified to the purifying of the fleſh; how much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt, who through the eternal ſpirit, offered himſelf without ſpot to God, purge your conſciences from dead works, to ſerve the living Lord, Heb.* 9. 13, 14? O then, look unto Chriſt and be healed, tell him (as he did) *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canſt make me clean.* No Soap, nor Nitre can purge it; the general deluge ſwept away

away ſinners, but could not waſh away one ſin.

3. Againſt the bondage of ſin; every one is by nature a bondſlave to corruption: Now Chriſt was ſent to Preach, as well as purchaſe deliverance for captives, and to open the Priſon to them that are bound, *Iſa.* 61. 1, 2. If a number of men were taken captives by the Turks, and made Gally-ſlaves; ſuppoſe ſome rich Merchant ſhould lay down a vaſt ſum of Money to purchaſe their liberty; or a great Prince make way by the Sword for their eſcape, or give ſome Priſoners in exchange for them; and ſhould this dear-bought liberty be proclaimed to all in general, That whoever will apply themſelves to him, ſhould be free from bondage; How deſervedly may thoſe lye and dye in Chains, that will not accept and make uſe of thoſe eaſie terms? If thou cry out, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me, &c?* Chriſt alone, that Son will make you free, *Joh.* 8. 32, 33, 34. 'Tis not a feigned, or fancied, but a real liberty, free indeed.

4. Againſt the danger of ſin; Art thou afraid of ſuch a corruption? art thou annoyed with ſuch a temptation, and ready to ſay, ah, I ſhall one day periſh by the hand of ſuch a ſin? Then to prevent falling into ſin, and antidote thee againſt the ſolicitations of it, with *Paul* run to Chriſt, and beſeech the Lord once and again, till thou have that anſwer, *My grace is ſufficient for thee*, 2 *Cor.* 12. 8, 9.

When

When ſin comes as a *Potiphars* Wife, and offers thee deadly Poiſon in a golden Cup, let Faith anſwer, I would conſent, but that I am a Chriſtian; how can I do this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt my Chriſt? I cannot gratifie this or that luſt, but I muſt be diſloyal to my Lord Chriſt. When ever temptations aſſault, and an hoſt incamp againſt thee, haſt to the Captain of thy Salvation, as *David*, at *What time I am afraid, I will truſt in thee*, Pſal. 56. 3.

5. Againſt the whole body of ſin, make uſe of Chriſt, who came to deſtroy the works of the Devil: Would thou have ſin mortified and killed, and the old man crucified, nail him to the Croſs of Chriſt, that by vertue of his death, ſin may receive its deaths wound; no corruptions can ſtand before Chriſts Croſs. Rom. 6. 8, *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of ſin might be deſtroyed.*

1. Art thou troubled and moleſted with paſſion, and tranſported with anger? nothing ſo effectual to ſubdue and bridle that ſhort madneſs, as Chriſt. *Nihil ita iræ impetum cohibet, ſicut Ieſus:* 'Tis the property of contraries to expel one another. Chriſt is meekneſs and love.

2. Doth Pride, that deteſtable ſin, ſwell thee? art thou proud of wealth, honour, gifts, friends, *&c?* *Nihil ita ſuperbiæ tumorem, ſedat ſicut Ieſus*, he is humble and lowly, *Mat.* 11. 29.

3. Or

3. Or that diabolical ſin of envy? Chriſt can cure thee of that rotten vice: *Nihil ita livoris culmas; ſanat ſicut Ieſus:* Who ever ſhewed more oppoſition to it than Chriſt, who prayed that his Servants might have the ſame glory with him, *Joh.* 17. 22.

4. Or that idolatrous heatheniſh ſin of Covetouſneſs? Chriſt alone can quench the inſatiable thirſt after worldly things. *Joh.* 4. 14, *Whoever drinks of this water ſhall never thirſt. Nil ita temperat ſitim avaritiæ ſicut Ieſus.* Thou wilt trample the Moon under thy feet, and ſcorn to love this poor dunghil-world, or be fond of theſe beautiful vanities, and fair-fac'd nothings.

Laſtly, Doſt thou feel in thy Soul the ſcorching heat of Concupiſcence, and knoweſt not how to rid thy ſelf of it? Go to Chriſt, who will quickly quench that flame: *Nihil ita extinguit libidinis flammam, ſicut Ieſus.* Chriſts blood is an excellent antidote againſt luſt, and will quench, and not curb only, that inflamation. So we might add many more inſtances for our mortification, *&c.*

2. As a Phyſician to cure all Diſeaſes; Chriſt, the gift of God, is a moſt excellent and ſoveraign Remedy for all diſeaſes and ſpiritual indiſpoſitions; whatever the Soul ails, go to Chriſt, and he can and will help.

1. For darkneſs and blindneſs; none better than Chriſt. Do the eyes of thy mind wax

dim

dim and dark, that thou canſt not (ſo well as formerly) ſee the foulneſs of ſin, the fairneſs of Chriſt, the beauty of holineſs? O make uſe of Chriſt, who can open blind eyes, and clear the ſight, and make you ſee that plainly, that others can ſcarce perceive. He can illuminate the mind, anoint the eye with eye-ſalve, *Rev.* 3. 18, that thou maiſt ſee how naked and wretched thou art; diſpel all darkneſs, and ſhew thee the light of life, *John* 8. 12, and 12. 46. If any walk in darkneſs, and hath no light, let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay himſelf upon his God, *Iſa.* 50. 10.

2. Deadneſs; Chriſt is an effectual remedy againſt deadneſs and lifeleſneſs of ſpirit: Whither ſhould we go but unto him who hath the words of eternal life? Thou haſt fallen among Thieves, and they have bereaved thee of all, yea, of life it ſelf; why Chriſt is that good *Samaritan*, which puts Wine and Oyl into thy wounded Soul, *Luk.* 10. 30, he complains that ye will not come unto him, that ye may have life; he is called our life, *Col.* 3. 4. O derive life and ſtrength from him.

3. Hardneſs; Art thou infected with that ſore diſeaſe of hardneſs of heart, ſo that thou canſt not mourn for ſin, nor art ſcarce ſenſible of the great burden of ſin and miſery, nor lay to heart the evils of the times, but thy heart is a Rock, or an Adamant? O go to Chriſt, who can, and will take away the heart of ſtone, and

and give thee a heart of flesh, *Ezek.* 11. 19, and 36. 26. In him this gracious promise is, and ever shall be, *yea*, and *Amen.* Soak thy heart thorowly in this promise, and set before thine eyes a crucified bleeding Saviour. Hence that saying of *Bernard*, *Cui fons forte sicul es lanynam invocat Iesum, non fluxit uberius.* What hardness of heart could ever stand before Jesus Christ? or what Soul ever went to Christ, and came away with a hard heart, and was not melted as wax before the Sun? If Christ do but strike upon the heart, though it were a Rock, he can make it gush out with a torrent of brinish tears.

4. Barrenness; Thou complainest of unfruitfulness, thou receivest much and returnest little, thou art dry and unprofitable; make use of Christ in this case; the water is not more effectual to make fruitful the barren ground, than the dew of Christs Grace, to fructifie a barren heart; *I the Lord can turn a barren wilderness into a fruitful garden*, Isa. 51. 3. He hath promised to make the Wilderness like Eden, and the Desert like the Garden of the Lord. He hath said, *Isa.* 35. 1, 2, 6, 7, That *the desert shall blossom as the rose, yea it shall blossom abundantly; for in the wilderness shall water break out, and streams in the desert, and the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water.* Go to Christ for the fulfilling of those great and precious promises; say, *Cant.* 4. *ult.* Lord send out thy spi-

ſpirit, to breathe upon my Soul, to blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out, &c. Chriſt ſaith, *Except ye abide in me, and I in you, ye cannot bear fruit.* Under the term abiding, is implyed, making uſe of Chriſt, drawing ſap and nouriſhment from him, *Joh.* 15. 4, 5.

5. Deſpondency; when thou art diſquieted with melancholly, *Pſal.* 27. 13, doubting and diſtruſtful thoughts ariſing from the weakneſs of Grace, power of Corruption, and malice of Satan; have recourſe to Chriſt, who hath an incomparable faculty of diſpelling all theſe perplexed and penſive conceits that do torture thy mind: He himſelf ſuffered, and was tempted, was a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief, and therefore is able to ſuccour us in all our temptations and troubles, *Heb.* 2. 18, and 4. 15, 16. Now if a man be in any trouble in outward eſtate or body, what will he do in ſuch a caſe? He will go and conſult with one that hath been in the like condition. Do thus, make uſe of Chriſt for help, who hath ſaid, *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee,* Heb. 13. 5; which words of his, being ſpoken home to the heart of a diſtruſtful, perplexed perſon, by his own Spirit, muſt needs be of refreſhing vertue, and reviving power, as that light will ever ſpring up out of darkneſs, and ſcatter thoſe miſts that darken the mind and diſturb our peace: 'tis he that forgiveth all thy ſins, and healeth all thy diſeaſes, *Pſal.* 103. 3.

3. Improve this gift of God, as a ſweet and forcible attractive and help to draw your hearts to the performance of all thoſe duties that are required of you; and to aſſiſt in the exerciſe of thoſe graces that are to be found in you.

As 1. Faith; In the want or weakneſs of Faith, make uſe of Chriſt, who muſt needs be very helpful; for he is the author and finiſher of your faith, *Heb.* 12. 2, he is infinitely able to begin, increaſe, and perfect your faith, ſo as that it can have no other vertue or power, but ſuch as is derived only from him. 'Tis he by whom we believe in God, who raiſed him from the dead; his own Diſciples finding their faith infirm and weak, did repair to him for more ſtrength, and for a larger meaſure of it, acknowledging him to be able, and themſelves impotent and unable to do it, ſaying, *Luke* 17. 5, *Lord increaſe our faith.*

2. Repentance; Does any lye and groan under the guilt and burden of impenitency? O let him addreſs himſelf to Chriſt in this ſad caſe, who came into the world to call ſinners to repentance; not as we in the Miniſtry, to call outwardly, but to call with an effectual voice, and to cauſe to repent, *Mat.* 11. 13. God not only gave him to the world to be a Saviour, but hath exalted him to be a Prince, to give repentance and remiſſion of ſins, *Act.* 5. 31. If thy heart be ſecure and ſenſeleſs, go to Chriſt who will freely give (not ſell) and

work

work in thee godly ſorrow, that leads to repentance unto ſalvation, not to be repented of. That repentance you frame in your ſelves, will miſerably deceive you; ſo that *Auſtin* ſaid, that repentance doth drown more than ſin, when you think you can ſufficiently do it your ſelves; whereas Chriſt alone doth give true and acceptable repentance.

3. Love; Chriſt is the beſt teacher of Love that ever the world had; who taught it, not only by his words, but by his blood, by his life, and by his death. Wouldeſt thou learn to love? Go to Chriſt; if thou canſt not learn it of him, thou canſt never learn it. Love is the greateſt commander of love, and the moſt effectual argument that can inſuperably conſtrain us to it; and none ever loved at the rate and meaſure that Chriſt hath loved; to ſtand by ſuch a fire, is the way for a congealed heart to melt, and the coldeſt affections to grow warm. A lively Faith ſtill holding Chriſt the glaſs of infinite love and goodneſs, before our faces, is the greateſt leſſon in the art of love. A believing view of the nature, undertaking, love, obedience, doctrine, example, ſufferings, interceſſion, and Kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, muſt needs inflame believers hearts with an anſwerable degree of love: O ſteep that ſtiff and hardned heart in the blood of Chriſt, and it will melt, and it will change thy unkind, unthankful heart, in the very nature of love, to come over with *Thomas*, and by the paſſage of

his wounds, wind thy ſelf into his heart.

4. Obedience, both active and paſſive, to which Chriſt is both an incomparable motive, and admirable pattern: He fulfilled all righteouſneſs, and became obedient to the death of the Croſs; *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,* was his reſolution when he came into the world; and *not my will, but thine be done,* when he went out of it. He hath ſaid, he will write his Laws in your hearts, and cauſe you to walk in his ſtatutes, and give you one heart and one way, that ye may ſerve him for ever, *Ezek.* 36. 27. Chriſts obedience is thine, walking in Chriſt; all the acts of it are exerted and performed in the ſtrength of Chriſt.

5. Prayer; would you know how to pray, as to have your Prayer accepted and anſwered? let Chriſt be made uſe of, who is the alone Mediator, that by the vail of his fleſh, hath made a new and living way into the holy place; and ſits at Gods right hand making requeſt for you: So that by him, you may have free acceſs with boldneſs to the throne of grace, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20. Have you a friend in the Court, that will plead your cauſe, and ſpeak a good word to the King, and will you not make uſe of him? *O Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, Heb.* 4. 16. In Chriſt we have acceſs, *Eph.* 2. 18, *and* 3. 14. *Rom.* 8. 34. 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. *Joh.* 14. 13. If ye ask any thing in my name, I will do it; in time of the Law,

if

if any ſinned, he was to go to the High Prieſt, who was to mediate and intercede for him to God. So now we muſt come to Chriſt, who mediates, and makes interceſſion for us; though we have tranſgreſſed, he hath ſuffered; though we be unworthy, yet he is worthy; if we and our ſuit be commended by one of ſo great worth, and ſuch intereſt in the Father, can we doubt of ſucceſs?—He will give us alſo his ſpirit, to help our infirmities, and teach us what to pray for as we ought, and lead us by the hand unto God, and enable us to cry, *Abba*, Father.

4. Improve Chriſt, as the purchaſer and conveyer of all bleſſings and benefits to your Souls, which they ſtand in need of; are you empty and hungry, come to him for food; are you naked, come to him for clothes; are you weak, come to him for ſtrength; if wavering, for ſtedfaſtneſs; if weary, for reſt.

1. Let the poor, needy and hungry Soul come to Chriſt, and not lay out its money for that which is not bread; but hearken unto him, eat that which is good, and let your ſoul delight it ſelf in fatneſs, *Iſa.* 55. 2, 3. He alone will feed and fill the Soul, and ſatiate it with his goodneſs; *He will make a feaſt of fat things, a feaſt of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined, Iſa.* 25. 6. O labour to take in his ſweeteſt conſolations freſh every morning; the Soul cannot live without ſome comfort or other,

if it finds no ſuch ſweetneſs in Chriſt it will look for it elſewhere; and if it taſt nothing in his ways to keep it up, it will go down to earthly delights for relief.

2. Let the wretched, naked Soul, make uſe of Chriſt, and not ſow together Fig-leaves, as *Adam*, *Gen.* 3. 7. Never think to patch together a deal of filthy rags to cover thy uncleanneſs and nakedneſs, *Iſa.* 64. 6. But if thou know that thou art naked, then buy of Chriſt *white raiment that thou maiſt be clothed, and the ſhame of thy nakedneſs do not appear*, *Rev.* 3. 18. Chriſts righteouſneſs is a long white robe to cover thy nakedneſs, ſee *Ezek.* 16. begin. the Soul according to its nativity is naked and filthy; but Chriſt ſpreads his skirt over it, and puts on excellent ornaments, he will take away thy filthy garments, and cloathe thee with change of raiment, *Zech.* 3. begin.

3 Let the weak improve Chriſt for ſtrength, who will perfect his ſtrength in their weakneſs; ſo that thou maiſt ſay with the Apoſtle, *When I am weak, then I am ſtrong*, 2 Cor. 12. 9. And by his ſtrength, I can do all things, *Phil.* 4. 13. Truſt not in your own ſtrength, but rely upon the power of Chriſt in all your performances; art thou to grapple with ſome ſtrong corruption or temptation, and deſireſt to overcome it? haſt thou ſome weighty and difficult duty to perform? make tryal of Chriſt, and thou ſhalt find that he gives power

to

to the ſaint, and to them that have no might, *Iſa.* 40. 29.

4. Let the wavering make uſe of him for ſtability and fixedneſs; Art thou afraid of Apoſtacy in theſe backſliding times, go to Chriſt to ſtabliſh thee, 1 *Theſ.* 3. 13, That *he eſtabliſh your hearts, unblameable in holineſs before God, even our father, at the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with all his ſaints.* He is a Rock, if thou build on him, thou ſhalt never be moved, *Matt.* 16. 10. God ſtabliſheth your Souls in Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 1. 21. If you can get rooted and built up in him, and eſtabliſhed by him in the faith, you need not fear (though you muſt beware) of being ſpoiled through Philoſophy and vain deceit, *Col.* 2. 7, 8. Do you fear falling away from the Grace or Truth of God? then make ſpecial uſe of Chriſt, who is able to eſtabliſh you, and keep you from falling, and preſent you faultleſs before the preſence of his glory with exceeding joy, *Jude* 24.

5. Let the weary Soul come to Chriſt, and he ſhall find reſt; make uſe of this gift of God, which is far more ſuitable to a wandering ſin-ſick ſoul, than the ſofteſt bed to the wearied body: what was propheſied by *Lamech* concerning his Son *Noah*, is compleatly fulfill'd in Chriſt, whereof *Noah* was a type, *Gen.* 5. 29, *He called his ſon Noah*, reſt, (for ſaith he) *this ſame ſhall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands.* Think often on that ſoul-refreſhing promiſe, Matt. 11 28,

Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt; take my yoke upon you, &c. Come poor reſtleſs, eaſeleſs, and dejected ſouls, let others weary themſelves in ſeeking riches and reputation in the world, to you I faithfully promiſe reſt, which is the thing you want. *Feciſti nos domine propter te, & inquietum eſt cor noſtrum, donec veniat ad te.*

5. Improve this gift of God as a ſtanding cordial againſt thoſe failings and deſpondencies of ſpirit, and make uſe of it in the midſt of thoſe ſad thoughts and miſgivings of heart you may be under through fear of wrath, terrours of conſcience, and ſhrinking apprehenſions of death and judgment.

1. Is God angry, doth he begin to thunder, and write bitter things againſt thee? and his waves and billows go over you, ſo that your moiſture is dried up, and you almoſt overwhelmed with the fierceneſs of his wrath? Now let faith recollect it ſelf and ſay, Well, Chriſt is mine, in whoſe wounds is room enough to hold, and in whoſe heart is readineſs enough to receive all that fly unto him; true indeed, there is a terrible ſtorm of juſtice gathering over my head, and ready to fall upon me, but my Chriſt is my ſhelter, *an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt*, Iſa. 32. 2. A flood of vengeance is coming, but I am got into the Ark; deſtruction near, but Chriſt is my Paſſover, my little Sanctuary, able and willing to ſave to the uttermoſt with all kinds and degrees of Salvation,

tion, *Heb.* 7. 25. *He hath trodden the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with him, Iſa.* 63. 3. O then enter into this rock, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, till the indignation be over-paſt. When God is angry with thy ſoul, take Chriſt in thine arms and come to him.

2. Art thou grown ſtrange to him, and alienated thy ſelf from him by ſin? none is ſo proper and neceſſary to be made uſe of as Chriſt in this caſe, who is the peace-maker between God and man; who hath not only made peace between thoſe, but ſo ratified and confirmed it, that nothing ſhall be ever able to diſſolve it. God reconciles the world to himſelf by Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. not only them that were ſtrangers, but even enemies, *Col.* 1. 21. Thoſe that are afar of, are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt; he hath broken down the partition-wall, and ſlain the enmity, *Epheſ.* 2 16, 17, 18. If thou haſt ſome dear friend who beſtows a gift on thee, in token of his dear love and reſpect to thee, and there ſhould be afterwards ſome diſagreeing and falling out betwixt you, wouldſt thou ſhew this gift a pledg of league and amity? *&c.* thus hold up Chriſt to God.

3. Or though it be not thus, yet thou wanteſt the ſenſe and feeling of his love, and art comfortleſs in the want of it; O then make uſe of Chriſt in this caſe, who is able to make all Conſolations abound, and fill thy ſoul with joy and peace in believing: He hath ſaid, *Joh.* 14. 18. *I*

will

will not leave you comfortleſs; Triſtatur aliquis noſtrum, veniat in cor Jeſus. Is any man ſad (ſaith *Bernard*) let that ſweeteſt name Jeſus come into his heart, and ſo he ſhall have that peace and comfort that the world cannot give, neither can the world take it away from him. Chriſt is a moſt ſoveraign Cordial, apply and uſe him, and your joy will be full.

4. Or art thou terrified in Conſcience, and groaning under the inſupportable burden of a wounded ſpirit? art thou affrighted with accuſing and condemning thoughts? O go to Chriſt, who as he can make peace in the Court of Heaven, ſo he can create peace in thy heart, and ſtill the crys of Conſcience, and make a calm there alſo; though the waves roar, and the winds blow, *&c.* thy ſoul ſhall have peace in him which paſſeth all underſtanding, *Col.* 1. 20. And will ſay, in me ye ſhall have peace, be of good cheer, let not your hearts be troubled; though your hearts ake and tremble, yet he is greater than your hearts, who is nigh to juſtifie you, *Iſa.* 50. 8 ſo that you may triumph with the Apoſtle, *Who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that died,* Rom. 8 34. Expect no peace in laying aſide Chriſt.

5. Are you afraid of death and judgment to come? in this caſe alſo make uſe of Chriſt. It's reported by *Caſſander* that in ancient times, ſick and weak dying perſons were directed and accuſtomed to make uſe of Chriſt at that time eſpecially, interpoſing him betwixt them and

Gods

Gods Judgment; ſaying theſe words, *Lord we put thee the death of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt betwixt us and thy judgment.* But what need we look into Hiſtorians, the Scriptures ſhew what languiſhing ſouls and drooping ſpirits muſt do, *Pſal.* 23. 4, 5. *Though I walk in the valley of the ſhadow of death, yet I will fear no evil, &c.* Chriſt hath deſtroyed him that had the power of death, *Heb.* 2. 4. taken out the venome and malignity of it; Death loſt its ſting in Chriſts ſide: *And now O death where is thy ſting? O grave where is thy victory?* 1 Cor. 15. 55, 57. Or feareſt thou judgment, look to Chriſt and thou ſhalt not die the ſecond death, but he will raiſe thee up at the laſt day, *Joh* 6. 49, 50. Having Chriſt, thou maiſt ſtand in judgment, and lift up thy head with joy, for 'tis the day of thy Redemption, then the redeemed of the Lord ſhall return with joy everlaſting; and you ſhall appear with him in glory.

4. Fourth Branch of Exhortation, Be very thankful for him; yea let your whole ſoul go out in thankfulneſs; be ever praiſing and magnifying God for his unſpeakable mercy in Chriſt, your Sacrifice, your Redeemer, your Saviour; often call upon your ſluggiſh hearts, and ſay, *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and all that is within me bleſs his holy name,* Pſal. 103. 1. and 116. 12. What ſhall I render to the Lord for this the greateſt of all his benefits?

O be thankful, not in a common, ordinary, formal manner, but in the most lively, enlarged and raised manner that is possible; where the mercy is high and great, the thankfulness must bear some proportion to it. O let your apprehensions be widened, to conceive the vastness of this mercy, that your affections may be more enlarged to praise God for it; O how shall we get our hearts affected with it! what thankfulness can be enough for such a gift! should not the whole soul be summon'd in to give its most united acknowledgment of so signal a mercy? for God to give his only begotten Son to be a Saviour for sinners! Here's the wonder of wonders! God never did the like before, and he'l never do the like again; and blessed be his name, there is no need he should. It would have been admirable mercy if God would have sent some other person upon this Errand to redeem and save undone sinners. If send he will, why did he not send an Angel, (or body of Angels) to try their skill, and see what they could do? Nay, why did he not send an Angel (as once he did) with a flaming sword in his hand to keep off sinners from the Tree of Life? O this did not comport with his gracious designs (though it did too well with the creatures merit) therefore he would not do it; no his own Son shall be pitcht upon, he is the person whom God will send. Surely here was love, great love, great to the degree of infiniteness. Mil-

lions

lions of Angels were nothing to one Son, to one ſuch Son, his firſt-born, his only begotten Son, the Son of his love, who lay in his boſom, had been his delight from everlaſting. O aſtoniſhing mercy! O admirable goodneſs and condeſcention! how may we cry out here, *Lord what is man that thou art thus mindful of him, and the Son of man that thou makeſt this account of him!* Pſal. 8. 4. and 144. 3. or as *Job* 7. 17. *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him, and that thou ſhouldeſt ſet thine heart upon him!* Here was God ſo loving, ſo as can never be expreſſed, never be comprehended, *Joh* 3. 16. *God ſo loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believed on him might not periſh, but have everlaſting life.*

The Heavens and the Earth were once called upon to be filled with aſtoniſhment, becauſe of the ingratitude of a ſinful people, *Iſa.* 1. 2. May not now Heaven and Earth, Angels and men, all creatures whatſoever, be called upon to be filled with aſtoniſhment becauſe of the ſtupendious love of God! O Chriſtians! what influence hath this upon your dull and ſluggiſh hearts? what are you made of, that you are no more (in the ſenſe of it) drawn out in bleſſing, loving, admiring and adoring of God? Pray, if there be any holy ingenuity in you, take ſome pains with your ſelves, that you may be much more affected with it, and give not over, till you have ſuch thoughts and affections,

ſections (upon Gods giving his Son) raiſed in you as may in ſome meaſure anſwer to thoſe thoughts and affections which you ſhall have about it, when you ſhall be in Heaven. The Angels never reaped that advantage that we do, yet they were at praiſing-work as ſoon as ever Chriſt was born, *Luk.* 2. 13, 14. *A multitude of the heavenly hoſt was praiſing God, ſaying, Glory to God in the higheſt, on earth peace, and good will towards men*

Good *Zachary* ſo ſoon as his mouth was opened, begun his Prophecy, with *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, who hath viſited and redeemed his people*, Luk. 1. 68, 69. And old *Simeon* ended his life with praiſe and bleſſing God, *Luk.* 1. 19. 'Tis the duty of all Chriſtians in every thing to give thanks, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 18. becauſe this is the will of God in Chriſt, much more ſhould every ſoul give thanks, for Chriſt the top of all bleſſings, the flower of all enjoyments; think much of this threefold cord of obligation to praiſe: 1. When a gift is free: 2. When it is great. 3. When ſpecial; thanks is moſt due: for though a man receive a benefit from another, yet if he have in any meaſure deſerved it before, or it be in lieu of ſomething to be done after, it abates the thankfulneſs: But though it be free, yet if it be not much worth, that leſſens thanks; but if it be a thing of worth, yet if it be commonly to be had, or given to all, this will take off ſomewhat of the edg of thankfulneſs. But now, 1. Chriſt

1. Chriſt is an abſolutely free gift, not only undeſerved, but undeſired and expected: kindneſs by the rules of friendſhip and love, in the heathens judgment, doth challenge either recompence if we deal with our matches, or acknowledgment where the diſtance is great, and the greater this, the greater that: Now betwixt God and us the diſtance is infinite, and if it were poſſible our love and thankfulneſs ſhould fill up that diſtance, and extend it ſelf to infiniteneſs. Let Angels and men adore and praiſe God for this gift to eternity in Heaven, yet they muſt be aſhamed and bluſh at the imagination of merit. The dignity and worth of this gift muſt lay an infinite (though ſinleſs) debt for ever on all the Citizens of Glory, whether home-born, and natives of the Country, as elect Angels, or adopted ſtrangers, as glorified Saints. Chriſt is the flower, glory, and crown of free Grace.

2 The gift is of unſpeakable worth and excellency, than which none could ever be greater, none better, the only begotten Son, God bleſſed for evermore, the brightneſs of his Fathers Glory; co-equal and co-eſſential with the Father; there could be no addition at all made to his Glory; he was ſo high he could not be higher, ſo great, ſo good, *&c.* He is better than wealth or health, than peace or life.

3. There's diſtinguiſhing favour in beſtowing Chriſt on thee, and not on others; that which

which is common to all, will never leave ſuch an impreſſion of wonder and praiſe; but when it comes to me and us, that makes deepeſt impreſſion. The paſſing by of my Father and Mother, my Brother, my Siſter, Husband or Wife, Neighbour or Friend, and taking me, is a moſt endearing favour. Two lye in the ſame womb, ſit in the ſame ſeat, hear the ſame Sermon, and one is taken and another left, *Pſal.* 147. 12, 19, 20. *Praiſe the Lord, O Jeruſalem, praiſe thy God, O Zion.* Among many other grounds and reaſons, that's one in the 19. verſe, *He ſhews his word unto Jacob, his ſtatutes and his judgments to Iſrael, he hath not dealt ſo with any Nation.* Here he ſpeaks not of the meaſure (as if others had the ſame grace revealed in nature, but in inferiour degrees) for he ſaith, *as for his judgments they have not known them*; and being full of it, he concludes, *Praiſe ye the Lord:* Chriſt eſteemeth this the flower of Grace, and bleſſeth his Father for it, *Mat.* 11. 25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes.* To conſider, that of all *England*, all *Europe*, all *Adam*'s poſterity, that ever were maſters of a living ſoul, the Lord paſſed by ſo many thouſands and millions, and the lot of free grace fell upon me, preciſely by name, and not on many beſides, no leſs eligible than I was: O how ſhould it raviſh our hearts into admi-

admiration and praise. *Blessed are your eyes, for they see such things that many Kings and Prophets have desired to see and have not seen them*, Luk. 10. 23. O what thoughts will ye have of this mercy in Heaven when you shall have your souls laden with a massy weight of glory, and thousands of souls spitting out blasphemies on the Majesty of Heaven, out of the sense of the torment of the gnawing-worm that never dies; and you consider the soul of *Judas* might have been in my souls stead, and my soul in the same place of torment that he is now in. O the unsearchable riches of the free grace of God in Christ! How should we now sing that new Song that properly belongs to all redeemed ones, *Rev.* 14. 3. and to say with a loud voice, *blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth on the Throne for ever and ever*, Rev. 5. 8. *ad finem*: and *Rev* 7. 12. O how should we extol and shew forth his praises, had we as many tongues as members, or joints, or hairs; were our whole body turned into that one member, yet should we not be able for this high and glorious mercy, sufficiently to celebrate the praises of the most high God.

5. Fifth and last Branch of Exhortation, *Be fruitful in Christ*: True thankfulness improves the gift to the Donors honour. A friend gives me a token, I'le receive it for his sake; a jewel, I'le keep it for his sake; a Book, I'le use it for

his ſake; a Ring, I'le wear it for his ſake; that is, ſo as may beſt expreſs my love, and report his goodneſs. Were we truly thankful to our God, we would uſe and improve this gift for his ſake, to his glory. O let it be our chief care to improve this tranſcendently excellent gift, to his glory who gave it. Let me preſs this Exhortation on you in the words of the Apoſtle, *Col.* 2. 6. *As ye have therefore received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.* It is not enough to have or to know that we have received Chriſt, but we are to ſee that we walk in him, or according to him. 'Tis not ſufficient for us to take Jeſus Chriſt, this gift of God, offered in the Goſpel, but our deportment and carriage muſt be ſuch as becomes them that have received ſo great a favour. Chriſt was the greateſt Legacy that ever was bequeathed to poor creatures, and he and his benefits that come with him, is matter of greateſt weight and concernment that ever God be-truſted in the hands of duſt and aſhes; the moſt rich, glorious and perfect gift, that ever came out of the hands of God. *Wherefore let us gird up the loyns of our mind, and be ſober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt, as obedient children: Not faſhioning our ſelves according to the former luſts in our ignorance, but as he that hath called us is holy, ſo let us be holy in all manner of converſation,* 1 Pet. 1. 13, 14, 15. O what manner

ner of perſons ſhould we be in all holy converſation and godlineſs!

It is moſt reaſonable that we ſhould walk in Chriſt, as we have received him, both from the rules of ingenuity, fidelity and equity.

1. It is a rule of an ingenuous man, that nothing be done to the prejudice of him from whom we receive nothing but the faireſt expreſſions of favour and kindneſs. God deals with his people in ſweet expreſſions and carriages of condeſcending love, bounty, and good-will; all his ways are mercy and faithfulneſs; his withdrawings, or whatever God doth to his people, it is for their good: Now for any man to walk contrary to God, that ſtill goes on to diſcover more of the riches of his grace to him, is to requite evil for good, a piece of great diſingenuity: there is not only rebellion and diſobedience, but wickedneſs in it.

2. 'Tis a rule of fidelity: whatever is given to a man to be diſpoſed of upon ſuch and ſuch things, and for ſuch ends, ſhould be carefully imployed and laid out upon ſuch things, and for ſuch ends, according to the will of the giver. A man may certainly diſpoſe of his own as he pleaſes. Now Chriſt was not given to us to live as we liſt, or to walk in the vanity of our minds as other Gentiles, *Epheſ.* 4. 17. Thoſe that have received Chriſt, and do not walk worthy of him, do not improve him for mortifying the old man, and putting on the

new man, and for holiness of heart and life, they go against the will of him that hath bestowed this gift upon them.

3. 'Tis a rule and principle of equity: whatsoever we have received from another to occupy, we should return it with all possible advantage: being intrusted in anothers business, an ingenious and just man will labour to advantage him in whose business he is employed, as much if not more than his own. If we receive this special gift and grace of God, and instead of walking answerably we dishonour him by walking contrary to the grace we have received, where is justice and ingenuity in this deportment? As if a servant be employed in his Masters business, he is to use his utmost skill, and strength, and put to his utmost endeavours to perform his duty exactly. So we are servants, and whatever we do, is our duty, *Luk.* 17. 10. the stock we have received from another, must be faithfully returned to the owner with advantage, *Mat.* 25. 27. A servant is not to mind his own advantage, and profit, but his masters; the end why you perform duties, and frequent Ordinances, must not be meerly to be free from guilt and horrour, and to escape Judgment and Hell, that's but as a servant that works indeed, and does his masters business for his own ends; but you must eat and drink, work and trade, pray and hear, and all that you do, for God and his glory.

For

For directions, how we muſt walk in Chriſt: You muſt walk in Chriſt as you have received him

1. You received Chriſt as one that hath taken upon him your nature, and ſanctified it, *Joh.* 17. 19. and in this reſpect you ſhould walk in him, as thoſe that are ſanctified, *Epheſ.* 4 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. *But ye have not ſo learned Chriſt, &c.* 1 *Theſ.* 4. 4. *As you have received of us how you ought to walk and to pleaſe God, ſo ye would abound more and more; for this is the will of God, even your ſanctification, that every one of you ſhould know how to poſſeſs his veſſel in ſanctification and honour.*

2. As one that mediates and intercedes for you at the Throne of Grace; and ye ſhould be ſure to walk in him, come to God in this new and living way, that your perſons and ſervices may be accepted, and prayers anſwered.

3. As one to whom you have reſigned up your ſelves as your King and Lord, ruler and governour, that hath the ſole ordering and diſpoſing of you and all your affairs and ways; and in this reſpect, you ſhould yield obedience and ſubjection to his commands, and give up your ſelves wholly to him.

4. As one that is your Saviour, who is your ſtrength and ſafety againſt all enemies and evils; whoſe deſign and undertaking is to deliver you from the evil of ſin, Satan and the world; in all your fears, dangers, temptations, then you muſt fly unto him; and relye

upon him; when he hath reſtored liberty to you captives and ſlaves, you muſt walk in this liberty, and make uſe of it (not to ſin) but to ſerve him freely, without fear and without diſtraction.

5. As a guide and leader to ſhew you the way of life and happineſs; and 'tis nothing but reaſon you ſhould follow him, and walk as he walked. In a word, he is your life and your all, and ſo you ſhould live (not to your ſelves) but to him and his praiſe, and glorifie him in ſoul and body which are his; that ſince he died for all, 'tis very reaſonable that they *which believe ſhould not live henceforth to themſelves, but to him that died for them.* Rom. 6 22, 23. *Being made free from ſin, and become ſervants unto God, ye have your fruit unto holineſs, and the end everlaſting life. For the wages of ſin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.*

CHRIST

CHRIST

The Beſt

MASTER.

Joh. 13. 13. *Ye call me Maſter and Lord, and ye ſay well, for ſo I am.*

Ὑμεῖς φωνεῖτέ με, Ὁ Διδάσκαλος καὶ ὁ κύριος καὶ καλῶς λέγετε· εἰμὶ γάρ.

VOS me vocantes, *dicitis magiſter ac domine & bene dicitis ſum enim.* ὁ διδάσκαλος ὁ κύριος pro ὦ διδάσκαλε ὦ κύριε, *per enallagen*, as *Mark.* 15. 34. ὁ Θεός μου, ὁ Θεός μου, *quod ponitur*, Mat. 27. 46. Θεέ μου θεέ μου, theſe are put τεχνικῶς, (as Grammarians ſpeak) the *Nominative* for the *Vocative* caſe, *Vel eſt mutata forma orationis ut hoc dicatur vos compellando*

me utimur his vocibus magister & dominus. Unless we read it with *Epiphanius*, Ἐμὲ λέγετε κύριον καὶ διδάσκαλον. So *Erasmus* translates it, *Magistrum & dominum*; for saith he, it is not usual nor proper to call any thus, unless he be present, and they speak to him; but now Christs Disciples did call him so when he was absent, as *Joh.* 21. 7. This (saith *Beza*) is confessed; but here the word φωνεῖτε, (which may be rendred *salutatis, vel vocantes me appellatis*) being here used, it may be understood of the common speech wherewith they spoke to Christ when present. The *Syriack* word, *Rabban* and *Maran*, (as in *Maranatha*, the Lord cometh, 1 *Cor.* 16. 22.) soundeth something more Sacred and Divine, than ordinarily διδάσκαλος, and κύριος. Διδάσκαλος signifieth a teacher of Letters, Manners, or any Art, in relation whereunto they were called Disciples, or Learners: Κύριος *dicitur, qui pollet authoritate cui jus est præscribendi eras.* It properly signifieth one that hath authority, rule or dominion; being a word of relation also. It is in the writing of the Apostles simply and absolutely ascribed to Christ (saith *Zanchy*) a thousand times. It is used *civiliter*, as when we call an Honourable person, or one that hath servants, Lord. And Theologically, when this appellation is given to the one true God; answering the *Hebrew* name of God, *Jehovah*, which sets forth the absolute power and soveraignty of God over all the Creatures.

These

Theſe are the words of our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt to his Diſciples, wherein he begins to give them the ſenſe and expoſition of that his ſtrange and wonderful condeſcention of waſhing his Diſciples feet, whereof you have the Hiſtory in the precedent verſes. He doth now at large declare to what end, and renders the reaſon why he waſhed his Diſciples feet; this done, partly to ſhew his admirable love to them, (*verſ.* 1.) and to give them an example of humility and love one to another; and partly to intimate that he only cleanſeth us from our ſins, 1 *Joh.* 1. 7 There was in this his action a teaching myſtery, which they knew not, till they were further inſtructed; they yet perceived not that it was not ſo much material for them to have clean feet, as to be cleanſed by the blood of Chriſt, and have true humility and love one to another. Here he taketh up an argument from their own mouths to ſhew what they ought to do in imitation of him, except they will contradict themſelves, and in actions diſſent from their own words of common uſe: If I your Lord and Maſter have ſtooped ſo low as to waſh your feet, ye ought alſo to waſh one anothers feet, ye ought to be ready and willing to ſerve one another in love, καὶ ὑμεῖς is put for πολλῷ μᾶλλον καὶ ὑμεῖς, much more ought ye, ſeeing you are not (as ye confeſs) Lords over one another, but fellow-ſervants, equally bound in mutual duty. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, the ſervant is not greater than his lord*; an argument

gument *a majore* from the greater to the leſs. If Chriſt who excelleth all, do ſo admirably abaſe himſelf, how may it even ſhame thee? *verſ.* 15. *I have given you an example, that you ſhould do as I have done*; we muſt follow *rationem exempli, magis quam individuum actum*; the moral reaſon of the example, rather than do the individual act; that is, we muſt after Chriſts example, be ready to perform the meaneſt and loweſt offices of love one to another.

Doct. *Chriſt is a Chriſtians Lord and Maſter, and every Chriſtian is Chriſts ſervant: Chriſt and a Chriſtian ſtand in relation one to another as Lord and ſervant.* There is a relation between Chriſt and Believers, as betwixt Maſter and ſervants. Though Chriſt ſaith to the Apoſtles, *Joh.* 15. 5. *Henceforth I call you not ſervants but friends.* The meaning is not that he calleth them not ſervants at all, but not meer ſervants, they being more than ſervants, having ſuch acquaintance with his counſels as his friends; for he preſently, *verſ.* 20. bids *them remember that the ſervant is not greater than his Lord*, Mat. 23. 8. *One is your Maſter even Chriſt, and all ye are brethren*; and *verſ.* 10. the Apoſtles called themſelves *the ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt*, *Rom.* 1. 1. 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. *Phil.* 1. 1. He is called our Maſter and we his ſervants; becauſe he is our Rector, *expleno dominio*, with abſolute propriety, and doth not give us Laws to obey while we do our own work, but giveth

us

us his work to do, and Laws for the right doing of it; and it is a ſervice under his eye, and in dependance on him for our daily proviſions, as ſervants on their Lord. He hath work for us to do in the world, and the performance of it he will require. He biddeth his Sons *go work to day in my Vineyard*, Mat. 21. 28. and expecteth that they do his will, *ver.* 31. His ſervants are as Husbandmen, to whom he entruſteth his Vineyard, that he may receive the fruit, *ver.* 33, 34, 41, 43. Faithful ſervants ſhall be made rulers over his Houſhold, *Mat* 24. 45. 46. Chriſt delivereth his Talents to his ſervants to improve, and will require an account of the improvement at his coming, *Mat* 25. 14.

1. Chriſt is a Chriſtians Lord and Maſter.
2. Chriſtians are his ſervants.

For the firſt, concerning Chriſts Lordſhip, enquire what it is.

2. How it is. 3. Where it is.

1. What it is: obſerve that Chriſt as God-man, hath a threefold Lordſhip, as he is God he hath the ſame glory and dominion with the Father: and as God-man, Mediator, there is a dominion that reſults from his Office, and this is thus diſtinguiſhed:

1. Chriſt hath a more general dominion, or Lordſhip over all men, yea over all creatures: *He is over all, God bleſſed for ever.* Rom. 9. 5. Jeſus Chriſt he is *Lord of all*, Acts 10. 36. He is *King of Nations* Soveraign Lord to rule and judg them, *Joh.* 3. 35. the Father loves the Son, and

and *hath given all things into his hand*, Mat. 28. 18. *all power is given to me in Heaven and in Earth. God hath put all things under his feet*, Eph. 1. 22. This Lordſhip is or ſeems to be that Reign ſpoken of, 1 *Cor.* 15. 25, 28. *for he muſt reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet; and when all things ſhall be ſubdued unto him, then ſhall the ſon alſo himſelf be ſubject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all* This Oeconomical Kingdom or Lordſhip is exerciſed over all, whether good or bad, whether willing or unwilling to ſerve him, whether knowing or unknowingly; and it is manifeſted by the Acts,

1. Of reſtraining all creatures from croſſing or hindering his will and works, which he is determined ſhall be; *when he aſcended up on high he led captivity captive*, Eph. 4. 8. *Satan*, ſin, death, *Hell*, and whatever oppoſed him, in his ſtate of humiliation (*captivity* put for *captives*) a multitude of captives: (ἠχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν) Chriſt hath the keys of Hell and Death, *Rev.* 1. 18 *i. e.* power to deliver to, or keep from Hell and the Grave, and he is the worlds maſter, *Joh* 16 33. *be of good cheer I have overcome the world*, 'tis but a conquer'd Enemy, *let the waves roar, the Lord reingeth*, Pſal. 93. 1, & 72. 9. his enemies ſhall lick the duſt, he rules in the midſt of his enemies.

2. His Lordſhip is manifeſted in guiding and ſwaying them to his will and end, *Pſal.* 68. 30, *Rebuke the company of ſpearmen, the multitude of bulls, with the calves of the people, till every one*

one submit himself with pieces of silver. Captains, and Companies of greatest might, rage, and cruelty are bridled and tamed, made to stoop and pay tribute to him; *Kings of Isles shall bring presents; Kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts; yea all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him; for he shall deliver the needy when he cryeth: the poor and him that hath no helper,* Psal. 72. 10, 11, 12. He hath dominion over the greatest Kings, is Lord of Lords, to make them fulfill his pleasure, and serve his end, either in favour or correction to his Saints, or in punishment to others.

3. In judging and passing sentence on all at the last; He is Lord both of living and dead, and all shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ: as it is written, *As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God,* Rom. 14. 9, 10, 11.

2. He hath a special Lordship over his visible Church; as he is heir of all things, and head of all creatures, and at the last day Judg of all men; so he is King and Lord of his Church, which owns this one Lord, *Eph.* 4. 5. Both theirs and ours, Lord of all Churches, 1 *Cor* 1. 2. He is the head of the body the Church, in all things, or among all, having the preheminence: the government is upon his shoulders, *Isa.* 9. 6. He is chiefly a Lord because of his heritage the Church, wherein he rules.

1. As

1. As a King or Magiſtrate in a Commonwealth; and ſo he is ſaid to have the throne of his father *David*, and ſhall reign over the houſe of *Jacob* for ever, *and of his Kingdom there ſhall be no end*, Luke 1.32,33. and *Nathaniel* gives him this ſalutation, *John* 1.49. *Rabbi, thou art the ſon of God, thou art the King of* Iſrael, σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ, the word here uſed is κυρίος one who hath rule or dominion. This is uſed ſometimes *civiliter*, in ſome reſpect and general ſignification, is attributed to the creature, and ſo we call him to whom reverence and honour is due, ('tis a word of relation) or who hath ſervants, *Lord*; but moſt properly it is uſed *Theologice*, when this appellation is given to the only true God, anſwering the name of God *Jehovah*, (which the Seventy uſually tranſlate this word) and ſetteth forth the abſolute power and ſoveraignty of God over all the creatures, and therefore he is called εἷς κύριος the one or onely Lord, 1 *Cor.* 8 6. *Eph.* 4. 5. The Hebrew word *Adonai* ſpringing from a word that ſignifies a baſe or pillar which ſuſtains any thing, and the *Greek* word Βασιλεὺς *quaſi* βασίς τε λαε, borrowed from building, whereunto a Commonwealth is compared, whereof the King is ſaid to be the foundation: So *King*, contracted from the *Saxon* word, *Coning* or *Dyning*, ſignifying power and skill; and ſo *Lord* from *Laford* (a *Saxon* word) a ſuſtainer; *dominus* in its ſtrict and ſimple ſenſe, is one that hath a *jus diſponedi poſſidendi & utendi*, a right of having

having (or poſſeſſing) diſpoſing, and uſing, *i. e.* that is, full and ſole owner or proprietor: ſometimes 'tis taken more largely, as comprehending both propriety and rule; and ſometime more improperly, for government or command it ſelf: but amongſt Lawyers 'tis taken properly and ſtrictly for an owner. Yet here (not excluding the other) 'tis taken for one, *qui pollit authoritate cui jus eſt preſcribendi*, one that hath authority and governs by Law, which is an authoritative conſtitution, *de debito officii, præmii & pœnæ*, the ſignification of the will of a governour making the ſubjects duty, and determining of rewards to the obedient, and puniſhments to the diſobedient.

2. As a Maſter or teacher διδάσκαλος, *preceptor* or *magiſter*, one that teacheth letters or manners; and the latter word (*magiſter*) is more general, and declares ſome preheminence or dignity, as that *Mat.* 19. 16. *good maſter*, &c. Chriſt is the infallible guide and teacher of his Church. He knows his Fathers will, and there is neither ignorance, nor negligence, nor ambition or deceit in him, to cauſe him to conceal the mind of God; he teacheth all things needful to be known in order to our attaining eternal life; this is his office and work, therefore the title of *diſciples* is moſt commonly given to believers; much of Religion doth conſiſt in Learning of him as his diſciples.

3. As

3. As a master of a family, *Mat.* 10.24,25. *the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his Lord; it is enough that the disciple be as his master, and the servant as his Lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household,* εἰ τὸν οἰκοδεσπότην Βεελζεβὰλ ἐκάλεσαν, Mar. 13. 34. *For the son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work: watch ye therefore (for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the Cock crowing, or in the morning)* Mat. 20. 1. *the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an housholder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard,* &c. Hence he is often called Δεσπότης a word betokening a private right to rule, such as is exercised in the guiding and governing of a Family, and most properly signifies, a master, ruler, or governour over servants who are bound to him. This Lordship is declared by these Acts:

1. By calling and gathering them by his word, *Isa.* 55.45. *Behold I have given him for a witness, a leader and commander to the people: Behold thou shalt call a Nation, whom thou knowest not, and Nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the holy one of* Israel, *for he hath glorified thee.* These are the words of God the Father, concerning the *Messias* (of whom the *Jewish* Doctors

Doctors themselves expound this place) whom he appoints and ordains to be a teacher and testifier of his will, a leader, or a ruler, or a Prince and Commander not to *Israel* alone, but also to the *Gentiles*; to call a Nation by an external calling, and the Ministry of the Gospel, bestowed sometimes upon Cities, Kingdoms, Commonwealths, *&c.* *Mat.* 20. 1. thus he hires labourers into his vineyard, a calling according to means, common to the elect and reprobate, *ver.* 16. *Many are called, but few chosen.*

2. Giving Laws to them to direct and oblige them to obedience, *Isa.* 33. 22. *The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our law-giver,* (or statute-maker) *the Lord is our King, he will save us:* as a soveraign to protect his subjects that continue loyal to him, and live according to his laws. The Apostles were publishers of his laws. 1 *Thes.* 4. 2. *For ye know what commandments we gave you, by the Lord Jesus Christ; I coumand, yet not I, but the Lord.* 1 Cor. 7. 10, & 9, 14. *Even so hath Christ ordained, that they that Preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel,* Gal. 6. 2. *So fulfil the Law of Christ,* that is, of loving one another: none but Christ can give Laws, and there are none of Christs servants, but receive Laws from him.

3. Appointing order, power, offices, and officers, among them, whom he hath called to the profession of the Gospel, He gives authority to some for edification, not to destruction, 2 *Cor.* 20. 8. & 13, 10. *According to the power*

which the Lord hath given to edification, and not to deſtruction, Mark 13 34. as a man taking a far Journey, gave authority to his ſervants, τὴν ἐξουσίαν the charge of his domeſtical affairs; he appoints officers, ſets every one in his place, and furniſhes him with gifts ſuitable to his place, and cuts out every one his task or work *Eph.* 4. 8. *When he aſcended,* or aſſumed this Lordſhip, *he gave gifts to men: He gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtors and Teachers.* 1 Cor. 12. 28. *God hath ſet ſome in the Church, firſt Apoſtles, ſecondarily Prophets, thirdly teachers,* &c. He appoints Miniſters to be ſtewards, to diſtribute to every one in his family their due proportion, by way of feeding and governing, and they are all accountable to this Lord.

4. Preſcribing adminiſtrations for their food, phyſick, and all neceſſaries, 1 *Cor.* 12. 5. *There are differences of adminſtrations, but the ſame Lord,* (διαιρέσεις διακονιῶν) diverſities or diſtinctions of miniſtries, Eccleſiaſtical functions, for the uſe and benefit of his houſe, that none of his ſervants may want what is good and fit for them; he appoints ſtewards and rulers over his houſhold, to give every one their meat in due ſeaſon, *Mat.* 24. 45, and overſeers to feed the Church of God, and to take care of his Flock, which he purchaſed with his own blood, *Act.* 20. 28. to preach the Word, and diſpenſe the Sacraments. *Mat.* 18. 17, *Tell it unto the Church;*

Church; that is, the governing and ruling Church, which was invested with the power of binding and loosing, saith *Cameron*, ver 18, and the subject of the power of jurisdiction, to whom belong the censures of excomunication, absolution, 1 *Cor.* 5. 4,5. *By the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, &c.*

5. Conferring gifts and temporal mercies and deliverances upon them, *Eph.* 4.7. *To every one is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, gratia gratis data*, gifts for edifying the Church.

6. Correcting them in this life for their miscarriages. Judgment commonly begins at the house of God. He judges them in this world, that they may not be condemned with the world, 1 *Cor.* 11.32. *Rev.* 3.19. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent* Rev. 2. 16. *Repent, or I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.* Ver.22. *Behold I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her, into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds:* He suffers the world to do that which he will not endure in his own Family; His servants will never be faithful to him, nor find him faithful to them, if he did not sometimes chastise them.

7. Calling them to account in the end, and rewarding and punishing according to their works. *Mat.* 25 19 *After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them,*

and gives them their hire (that had been labourers in the Vineyard) *Mat.*20.8. *All muſt ſtand before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt*, Rom. 14.10. 2 *Cor.* 5.10. *We muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* He hath ſundry ſorts of ſervants, ſome that are only titular and complemental, call him Lord and Maſter, but are unprofitable; wearing his badge, but refuſing his work; profeſs him, but in works deny him; uſing the name of the Lord, but tranſgreſſing the rule of their Lord; the reward of theſe, *is to be caſt into utter darkneſs*, Mat. 25. 30. His faithful ſervants ſhall be rewarded with his preſence, who ſerved him in his abſence, and ſhall enter into the joy of their Lord.

3. Chriſt hath yet a more ſpecial Lordſhip over true believers, living members of his body, that are juſtified and ſanctified ſervants to him in their hearts, *Rom.* 14.18. *He that in theſe things*, (that is, righteouſneſs, peace, and joy) *ſerveth Chriſt, is acceptable to God, and approved of men*, that have the kingdom of Chriſt within them, *Luke* 17.22. The weapons of this kingdom *are not carnal, but ſpiritual and mighty*; and ſo his conqueſt of them, 2 *Cor.*10. 4. The former were members of the Church, theſe are the members of Chriſt, and this Lordſhip is exerciſed and put forth by his.

1. Drawing

1. Drawing them in by effectual calling, making them willing in the day of his power, *Pſal.* 110. 3. as he is *exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give them repentance and remiſſion of ſins,* Acts 5. 31. *putting his Laws into their minds, and writing them upon their hearts,* Heb. 8. 10. This calling by his word, and effectual operation of his ſpirit, doth bring them not only into the viſible, but into the inviſible Church, uniting them to Chriſt the head, as well as tying them to the members; and whereby grace is not only offered but conferred; is a calling in a ſaving manner, according to his purpoſe, the immediate conſequence of the election of his grace.

2. Suppreſſing in them whatever is oppoſite to his rule, and overcoming all enmity to his will: manifeſting and magnifying his grace and ſtrength in their infirmities, and making his power to reſt upon them, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. & 10. 4, 5. *Pulling down of ſtrong holds, and caſting down reaſonings and imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledg of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt*; not only curbing, but curing their nature, and changing the whole man.

3. Qualifying them for his ſervice, and enabling them to do his work, making them ready to do his will. A people prepared for the Lord, *Luke* 1. 17. making them *veſſels unto honour, purged and ſanctified, meet for their*

masters use, and prepared unto every good work, 2 Tim. 2. 21. If he find employment, he will give endowments too; if an errand, a tongue; if a word, an hand; if a burden, a back, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me*, saith *Paul*, Phil. 4. 13. as the Apostle laboured *according to his working which worketh in him mightily*, Col. 1. 29. So carrying them on in his ways with renewed strength, *they walk and are not weary, they run and faint not.* Isa. 40. 28, 29, 30, 31.

4. Giving them freedom to, and in his work: he makes them free, *John* 8. 32. Free from sin, that they become his servants, *Rom.* 6. 18. from the guilt, power and bondage of sin.

1. By releasing their debts, pardoning their sins, *Acts* 5. 31. it's an Act of Christs Lordship and Princedom to remit and forgive sins.

2. By loosing their bonds, and breaking the snares and fetters of them. *He proclaims liberty to captives, and opening of prison to them that are bound*, Isa. 61. 1, 2. Rom 8. 2. *The Law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of sin and death.*

3. Removing the spirit of bondage, and restoring peace and joy to the soul: He gives them peace with him, *John* 14. 27. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid:* and *Joh.* 16. 33.

He

He gives them *a free ſpirit*, an inlarged heart, a ſound mind, the *ſpirit of power and love*, 2 Tim. 1. 7.

5. He ſhews his Lordſhip towards his peculiar people, in maintaining them in his ſervice, and ſupplying them in all their wants: From this Head (wherein dwells all fullneſs) *all the body by joints and bands having nouriſhment miniſtred, increaſes with the increaſe of God*, Col 2. 19. *The Lord is their ſhepherd, they ſhall not want*, Pſal. 23. 1, and 84. 11. Verily his houſhold ſhall be fed, they ſhall want no good thing; *He gives them all things pertaining to life and godlineſs*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. Even of outward neceſſaries they ſhall have what they want, if not what they would.

6. In defending them againſt, and upholding them in all temptations and troubles. He tells them in all their dangers and ſtraits, *my grace is ſufficient for thee*, 2 Cor. 12. 9. He will keep them in all their ways; ſurely then, in all his work; ſafety evermore accompanies duty. His Servants are ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, *Eph.* 6. 10. They are preſerved in Chriſt Jeſus, *Jude* 2. and are never unſafe, but when they leave working, or with *Jonah* run away from their Maſter. *Micah* 5. 4, *He ſhall ſtand and feed in the ſtrength of the Lord, in the majeſty of the name of the Lord his God, and they ſhall abide.* There is no ſecurity but in Chriſts family; never are his ſervants in danger, but when they go out of it: and he takes

care of the ſeed and poſterity of his Servants, *Pſal.* 69. 35.

7. At laſt abundantly rewarding and dignifying them; In doing his work there is great reward; That happineſs which Chriſt gives his Servants in this life, is unſpeakable, their work ſeems to have more of wages than of work in it: but in the next life their joy will be ſo great, as that it cannot ſo well be ſaid to enter into them, as they to enter into it, *Mat.* 25. 51, *Well done good and faithful ſervant, thou haſt been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* The joy of their Lord, whoſe boſom is the hive and center of all goodneſs, and that in which all the ſcattered parcels of bleſſedneſs are bundled up. *Rev.* 22. 12, *Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work ſhall be.* Their ſervices are all Booked; he who formerly gave them abilities for to work, will now give them a recompence for working; their work, though never ſo great, is but ſmall to their wages; nor is the weight of their labours comparable to that of their Crown, and put in all their heavy ſufferings too. Rev. 2. 10, *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

2. How is this threefold Lordſhip exerciſed?
1. By what means?
2. For what end?

3. In

3. In what manner or order?

1*ſt*. By what means doth he exerciſe this Lordſhip?

1. By his hand of providence, concourſe, and co-operation in the creature; that Providence Chriſt ſpeaks of in *John* 5. 17, 19, 22, *My father worketh hitherto, and I work: For what things ſoever he doth, theſe alſo doth the ſon likewiſe.* ὑὸς ὁμοίως ποιῖ, which *Nazianzen* well interprets (ὲ κατὰ τὴν τῶν γιγομένων ὁμόιωσιν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν τῆς ἐξουσίας ὁμοτιμίαν) *i. e.* not for the ſimilitude of thoſe things they do, but in reſpect of the ſame power and authority of both; the Son doth not imitate, but co-operate; he works not like, but the ſame work that the Father doth. (*Quod operatur filius opus patris eſt*) *Hil.* Whatſoever the Father doth, the Son doth, becauſe they are one God, have one will, power, and working; for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; the Father judgeth not alone, becauſe he judgeth by the Son: The word judging here, ſignifies full power to rule, in Heaven and Earth, 1 *Cor* 8. 6, *There is one God the father, of whom are all things, and we in him*, or for him: *and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom are all things, and we by him. By*, here notes not the inſtrumental, but the principal cauſe; the Prepoſitions *of* and *by*, are not ſo to be taken, that we make two Cauſes, ſeeing they have but one Nature, though they be diſtinct perſons, and the Father

Father and Son work together; but by theſe (*of* and *by*) the Apoſtle differenceth their order and manner of working, Col 1. 17, *He is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt.*

2. By his Word and Spirit, in common works and gifts. *Pſal.* 110 2, *The Lord ſhall ſend the rod of thy ſtrength out of Zion: rule thou in the midſt of thine enemies.* The Lord, *i.e.* God the Father, (who had ſaid, *ſit thou on my right hand, i.e.* receive chief power and authority from me, and exerciſe juriſdiction over all) ſhall ſend forth the Rod of thy power, *i. e.* thy powerful and mighty Rod, or the Rod and Scepter whereby thou declareſt thy power and might; he means ſpecially the Preaching of the Word, which is the Power of God to Salvation, and is able to caſt down ſtrong holds, and every high thing. Be thou Ruler, by thy word and ſpirit, notwithſtanding all the reſiſtance of thine enemies, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19, *By which alſo he went and preached to the ſpirits in priſon*; by the power and manifeſtation of his ſpirit.

3. By his Word and Spirit, in ſaving works and effects. His Word worketh effectually in all them that believe, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 13, and the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter which he promiſes to ſend, *John* 14. 16, 18, and 16. 14, *He ſhall receive of mine, and ſhall ſhew it unto you.*

2. The

2. The end or uſe of this threefold Lordſhip, why or for which he exerciſes it.

1. For his Fathers and his own glory, John 13. 31, *Now is the ſon of man glorified, and God is glorified in him: i e* He ſhall be glorified in the admirable work of mans redemption; for death to overcome death, is, δόξα μεγάλη, great glory, and ſhews him to be the Lord of life, *Col.* 1. 16, all things were created, and do conſiſt, as well for him as by him, that he might have the preheminence and glory, as the firſt-born of every creature, or heir of all things.

2. For the ſalvation of his choſen, that he may give unto them eternal life, *John* 17. 2. *Father, the hour is come, glorifie thy Son, that thy Son may alſo glorifie thee; as thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal life, to as many as thou haſt given him.*

3. For the overthrow of all adverſe power to theſe ends: whatever oppoſeth the glory of God, and happineſs of believers, his Lordſhip is exerciſed for the ruine and deſtruction of it. 1 Cor. 15. 24, 25, *Then cometh the end, when he ſhall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the father, when he ſhall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power, For he muſt reign till he put all enemies under his feet.* *Pſal.* 2. 9, He hath ſet his King on his holy hill of *Zion*, and gives him the Heathen for his

his inheritance; and then adds concerning his enemies, that rage and take counsel against him, *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potters vessel*; and shall perish from the way utterly and irrecoverably, when his wrath is kindled against them, because they will not kiss the Son in token of subjection to his Lordship, nor have this man to reign over them. *Matt.* 24. 50, 51, *The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looked not for him; and in an hour that he is not ware of: And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

3. In what manner and order he that is a stranger to the Gospel, to whom the sound of it never came, is under the first. He that professes Christ is under the first and second. A true believer is under all these three Lordships.

1. Under the first as a man.

2. Under the second as a member of the Church.

3. Under the third, as a member of Christ.

The more general Lordship is conducing to the promoting of the special Lordship; and then both to the advancing of the more special, *Eph.* 1. 22, 23, *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him*

him that filleth all in all. He is over all things ſupream and abſolute; but the Churches Head, from whom they receive all manner of influence. He hath a ſpecial and peculiar reſpect to it, *Rev.* 3. 9. *Behold, I will make them of the ſynagogue of Satan, which ſay they are Jews and are not, but do lye; behold I will make them to come and worſhip before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.*

This great Lord hath a rod of iron to rule the Nations, and a golden Scepter to guide the Church; in the firſt the attribute manifeſted is Power, in the other Grace; in the world he ruleth by his Providence, in the Church by his Teſtimonies: *Pſal.* 93. 1. *The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with Majeſty.* vers. 2. *Thy Throne is eſtabliſhed of old, thou art from everlaſting: The Lord on high is mightier than the noiſe of many waters, yea than the mighty waves of the Sea. Thy teſtimonies are very ſure: Holineſs becomes thy houſe (O Lord) for ever.*

3. Whence hath Chriſt this Lordſhip? He is in this Office:

1. By Creation, *By him were all things created, Col.* 1. 16. *Joh.* 1. 3. Now abſolute propriety reſulteth immediately from Creation; it is not poſſible that there ſhould be a more full and certain title than Creation. He that giveth men and all the world their Being, and that of nothing, of no præ-exiſtent Matter, nor by any co-ordinate con-cauſe, muſt needs be abſolute owner of all, without the leaſt limitation; and

then

then he hath the (*jus regendi*) by immediate reſultancy from his abſolute propriety, ſuppoſing the nature of the Creature (to be a rational free agent) and the perfection of the Creator alone, which ſo qualifie one to be a ſubject, and the other to be the Governour, that they are as it were the *remotum fundamentum relationis*: He that gave man his being, muſt needs be his rightful Governour and Lord, as the Apoſtle makes it an argument, 1 *Cor.* 8.6. *To us there is but one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom are all things, and we by him, and by him all things conſiſt.* He continueth thy being and well being, and all the means thereto. *He upholdeth all things by the word of his power*, Heb. 1. 3.

2. By his Fathers advancement and appointment. God hath ſet him at *his own right hand, in the heavenly places, far above all Principality and Power, and Might and Dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but in that which is to come*, Epheſ. 1. 20, 21. Phil. 2. 9. *Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, and that every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Act. 2. 36. *Therefore let all the houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made that ſame Jeſus both Lord and Chriſt.* Act. 5. 36 *Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of ſins.* God hath given

ven him power over all fleſh; by his deſignation he hath right and prerogative of the firſt-born to be Lord of all

3. By his own purchaſe: *He has bought us with a price*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. A dear purchaſe, where the price was his precious blood, his own life. *Rom.* 14. 9. *For this end Chriſt both died, and roſe, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.* We read in the Law, of ſervants bought with money, (δοῦλος ἀργυρώνητος), and 'tis but reaſon, he that hath paid a valuable conſideration for a mans ſervice, ſhould have it: Now Chriſt *hath bought us not with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold, but with his own precious blood*, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. So that we are not our own, but his only that hath bought us, and paid for us, to glorifie him: He is our Lord and Maſter, *pleno jure.*

Secondly, The other Propoſition in the Doctrine, though not expreſſed in the Text, yet neceſſarily implied, the relations being mutual, *(relativa ſunt ſimul natura.)* That Chriſtians are Chriſts ſervants, not as inſtruments to execute his Decree; So *Nebuchadnezzar*, Jer. 27. 6. but they that out of a ſenſe of his love reſign themſelves to do his will.

1. In what reſpects: 2. Whence it is: 3. What an advancement 'tis to be his ſervants.

1. In what reſpect they are his ſervants? *Anſ.* In theſe ſeven.

1. To

1. To worſhip and ſerve him, *Pſal.* 45. 11. *He is thy Lord, and worſhip thou him.* A ſervant muſt attend and wait on his Maſter, and ſo the true Chriſtian on Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 7. 35. *That ye may attend upon the Lord without diſtraction.* Col. 3. 24. *For ye ſerve the Lord Chriſt.* Service to Chriſt is the duty and buſineſs of every Chriſtian, by ſhewing reverence to his perſon, and yeilding obedience to his commands.

1. Chriſt is to be worſhipped with Divine honour; it is the will of God *that all men ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father,* *Joh.* 5. 35. *Rev.* 5. 12. The glorious Angels do it, *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing.* And *verſ.* 13. Every Creature is heard to ſay, *Bleſſing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that ſiteeth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* We muſt worſhip him with inward and outward veneration; the firſt conſiſts in the truſt, fear, reverence and adoration of the heart, the latter in attendance upon, and due obſervance of Goſpel inſtitutions, as Prayer, hearing the Word, reverent uſe of the Sacraments.

'Tis a known ſtory that of *Amphilochius* to the Emperour *Theodoſius*; he had petition'd the Emperour to be ſevere againſt the *Arrians*, to diſcountenance and ſuppreſs them, becauſe in their opinions they did diſparage the Son of God; but could not prevail: Whereupon he made uſe of this device, coming one day into the Empe-

Emperours presence, and of *Arcadius* his Son, (who ruled jointly with his Father) he made his humble obeisance to the Emperour himself, and shewed him all reverence, but passed by his Son, shewing him no respect at all, the Emperour was much offended, sharply reproves *Amphilochius* for this affront to his Son; whereupon the good man vindicates his carriage, plainly telling the Emperour, he had given reverence enough to his Son; and now the Emperour was more incensed, commands him with great indignation to be thrust out of his Presence; which while some were doing, *Amphilochius* turns himself to the Emperour and said, O Emperour, thou being but a man, canst not bear the contempt or disparagement of thy Son, how dost thou think the great God can bear the contempt of his Son, which the *Arrians* do cast upon him? The Emperour was much affected with this, beg'd the Bishops pardon, commended his ingenuity; and did that now, which he had refused to do before.

2. With obedience to all his Laws and Commands, *Mat.* 17. 5. *This is my beloved Son, hear ye him.* This hearing of Christ is obeying of him in all his holy Laws and Institutions; and so 'tis, *q. d.* Here's a person whom I own for my Son, whom I have made your Lord, and have set him as my King on my holy hill, into whose hands I have put all power, on whose shoulders I have laid the government, therefore I charge you to hear him, and to yield all obedience and subje-

ction to him: Obedience is the chief badg and character of a ſervant, *Rom.* 6. 16. *His ſervants ye are to whom ye obey.* Eph. 6. 5. *Servants be obedient to your maſters.* There can be no better proof of ſervice than obedience, and therefore the people ſaid, *Joſh.* 24. 24. *The Lord our God will we ſerve, and his voice will we obey.* So *Abraham* the ſervant of the Lord, when he was called to go out of his own Country, obeyed; yea, in that greateſt trial of obedience, that ever we read any meer man to be put unto, being commanded to ſacrifice his only Son, he never ſtumbled upon the bare ſignification of his pleaſure: without diſputing or debating the matter, we muſt give both active and paſſive obedience.

3. This reverence and obedience will produce in Chriſts ſervants (and they are diſpoſitions well becoming ſervants) a fear to offend, and deſire to pleaſe their Lord; a deliberate apprehenſion of ſome worthineſs in another more than in a mans ſelf, is ever accompanied with a fear to diſpleaſe, and care to pleaſe the perſon reverenced, *Mal.* 1. 6. *If I be a Maſter, where is my fear? Serve the Lord with fear,* Pſal. 2. 11. *Heb.* 12. 28. From which a care to pleaſe cannot be ſevered; *Servants are to be obedient and to pleaſe their Maſters or Lord in all things, Tit.* 2. 9 So muſt Chriſts ſervants ſtudy to walk worthy of him unto all well-pleaſing, not much regarding what offence others take at him, ſo long as his maſter accepts his ſervice.

2. To go by Chriſts warrant, and take his word

word for his rule in all his actions, *Mar.* 13.34. He gives to every ſervant his work, and he is to receive commiſſion from him for it, as the Porter to watch, *&c.* what the maſter bids or forbids is to be obſerved: If he ſay go, as the Centurions ſervant, he is to go; or do this, it muſt be done; a ſervant may not do what he pleaſes, but muſt wait his maſters pleaſure, *Pſal.* 123. 2. *As the eyes of the ſervants look unto the hand of their maſters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her miſtreſs, ſo our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us.* A ſervant is not *ſui juris*, his own maſter, to guide his actions, but muſt ſubject his own will to the will of another, whether it be in ſomething to be done, or ſomething to be ſuffered; our right ſerving of Chriſt is, when 'tis done according to his own direction, both for the matter and manner of his ſervice. 'Tis a maxim in nature, every maſter is to be ſerved according as himſelf commands; and if the ſervant preſcribe to his maſter how he will ſerve him, he becomes his own, yea his Maſter's maſter. In the Civil Law a ſervant is ſaid to be (ἀπροσώπως) ſuch a one as ſuſtains no perſon, but is a dependent and adjunct to his maſter, to accommodate his will to the will of his maſter. *Socrates* could ſee this, and ſay, If there be a God he muſt be worſhipped, and if he be worſhipped it muſt be according to his own will, or elſe we do not worſhip him at all. Will worſhip is a ſervice that's ſo far from

bringing us to Heaven, that it will beguile us of Heaven.

3. To account and uſe all he hath and is, as not his own, but his maſters; all a Chriſtian is, is Chriſts, 1 *Cor.* 3.13. *And ye are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods.* As he is, ſo all he hath is his maſters talent, or goods, to be kept for him, and employed to his profit, 1 *Pet.* 1. 10. *As every man hath received the gift, even ſo miniſter the ſame one to another, as good ſtewards of the manifold grace of God.* Mat. 25. 14. He delivers unto them his goods, of which they are to make account to him at his coming, they are not *proprietarii*, but *depoſitarii*; not treaſurers, but ſtewards of his gifts; and muſt hear, *redde depoſitum*, he muſt be ſerved with his own, and that intirely without dividing; for we are not in part, but wholly his; no man can have any propriety in himſelf, or in any other creature, but what is derived from this abſolute Lord, and ſtandeth in full ſubordination to his propriety; and as we are not our own, ſo nothing is properly our own which we poſſeſs; for no man can have more title to any thing elſe than to himſelf; nor may we diſpoſe of any thing we have in any way, but to ſerve the will and intereſt of this abſolute Lord.

4. To follow his Maſter in his ways. Chriſtians muſt walk as his ſervants, not where and how they liſt, but as their Maſter pleaſes, *Joh.* 12. 26. *If any man ſerve me, let him follow me. Ye call me Lord and Maſter,* (ſaith Chriſt in the

the Text); and then verſ. 14, 15. *If I then your Lord and Maſter have waſhed your feet, ye ought then to waſh one anothers feet; for I have given you an example, that ye ſhould do as I have done unto you.* If our Lord have forgiven us our debts, much more ſhould we forgive our fellow-ſervants, *Mat.* 18. 32. Chriſt ſaith to his ſervants as *Gideon* to his Soldiers, *Judg.* 7. *What ye have ſeen me do, that do you. Follow me,* compriſeth in it the ſum of Chriſtianity, the whole duty of man: *He that ſaith, he abideth in Chriſt, ought himſelf alſo to walk as he walked,* 1 Joh. 2. 6. *Moſes was a faithful ſervant in all his houſe, for he made all things according to the Pattern ſhewed him in the Mount.* The examples of Chriſt are either active or paſſive, in both he is to be imitated in doing and ſuffering his Fathers will; and in the manner of both, as Chriſt ſaid to the Lawyer concerning the good *Samaritan, Go thou and do likewiſe*; ſo ſeeſt thou not Chriſts obedience to his Parents, bounty in giving, love in forgiving, diligence in his calling, meekneſs and humility in his carriage; contempt of the world, zeal for Gods glory, holineſs in his life, and unprovoked patience in his ſufferings; and his whole life Exemplary, from his Cradle to his Grave? go thou and do likewiſe, elſe thou art not his ſervant; yea, canſt be no Chriſtian: for this is the ſubſtance of Chriſtian Religion, the end of the Goſpel, and the character of one that ſhall inherit Glory: As when two walk together, a man cannot tell whom the ſervant fol-

lows till they part; so when Christ and our lusts, or our interests command contrary things, then it puts us to the trial, whether we be his servants or not? we must not only follow him in the easie and pleasant ways of obedience, but such as cross our lusts and interests: we must do in reality what the Lawyer said in compliment, *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.* Revel. 14. 14. The Angels are Gods Ministers that do his pleasure, *Psal.* 103. 21. A servant hath no will of his own, but hath given up his liberty to the directions and commands of others; hence Christs servants do earnestly desire and study to know what his will and pleasure is, and do it. The Masters will is motive enough, 1 *Thes.* 4. 3. and 5. 18. 1 *Pet.* 2. 15. This his will, if God will have it so, if Christ will have it so, it is enough to a faithful servant; the very signification of his will carries with it reason enough to enforce the practice of it. We are not to trade for our selves, and to drive on our own designs of credit and advantage; we are servants and employed for our masters use. A man that sets up of himself, is to trade for himself; but all that a servant doth, should be for his masters honour and profit; we are entrusted with talents of Gifts, Graces, Estates, *&c.* now after some time the Lord will come and reckon with us, and see what we have done for his honour, what good we have done in our places; how we have employed our gifts, improved our interests; whether we have beaten,

or

or helped our fellow ſervants; whether our talent hath been hid in a napkin, or laid out for the good of ſouls, and the glory of our Lord and Maſter.

5. To participate with him in his eſtate, both good and bad. *Joh.* 12. 26. *If any man ſerve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there ſhall my ſervant be. If any man ſerve me, him will my Father honour.* But the world will diſhonour and reproach the ſervant as they have done the Maſter, *Mat.* 10. 24, 25. *The Diſciple is not above his Maſter, nor the ſervant is not above his Lord. It is enough for the Diſciple that he be as his Maſter, and the ſervant as his Lord: If they have called the maſter of the houſe Beelzebub, how much more ſhall they call them of his houſhold?* Servants muſt be contented to bear his Croſs, whoſe priviledg it ſhall be to wear his Crown; and ſhould be ſatisfied with their allowance. The proper work of a ſervant is to wait and ſtay his maſters pleaſure for any comfort. He that is but a ſervant in the houſe, muſt not think to command whatſoever the houſe affordeth at his own pleaſure, (that's the maſters prerogative alone), but muſt content himſelf with what his maſter is content to allow him, and take his portion of meat, drink, livery, lodging, and every other thing, at the direction and appointment of his maſter; neither may the ſervant of Chriſt look to be his own carver in any thing, nor may he murmur againſt his maſter, with that ungracious ſervant in the Parable,

Mat. 25. 24. complaining of his hardneſs and auſterity, if his allowance in ſome things fall ſhort of his deſire; having food and raiment, be it never ſo little, never ſo courſe, he ſhould be content with it, nay though he want either or both, he ſhould be content without it, as grace and long experience had taught that faithful ſervant of Chriſt, *Phil.* 4. 11, *I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am, therewith to be content.* Pro. 30. 8, *Feed me with my allowance.*

6. To ſubmit to his correction. A beaten ſervant muſt not ſtrike again, nor word it with his maſter; ('tis chaff that flyes in the face of him that fannes it) muſt take it patiently, if he be buffeted undeſervedly or without fault. How much more ought Chriſtians to accept the puniſhment of their iniquity, when this gracious maſter ſhall think fit to exerciſe a little ſeverity towards them, eſpecially ſince he never ſtrikes them but for their fault (ſuch is his juſtice); nor (ſuch is his mercy) but for their good? he chides not, becauſe he loves it, but becauſe they need it, and becauſe he loves them, *Rev.* 3. 19. Servants muſt bear what they would not, as well as forbear what they would.

7. To expect wages from him. *Knowing* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that of the Lord ye ſhall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye ſerve the Lord Chriſt*, Col. 3. 24. The true Chriſtian believes, that his Lord is the rewarder

of

of all that diligently seek him, *Heb.* 11.6. And is content to refer all to him, knowing that though the vailes be uncertain, yet standing-wages are set and certain, *great is their reward in Heaven*; there is a reward in the very work, but he will bestow a further recompence hereafter; the Hypocrite looks for his reward here, and sells his service to Christ, works for present wages, but the sincere servant of Christ submits all to Christ. As we should not serve him for, so he will not be served without wages, even such as will weigh down all our work and all our woes, *Mat.* 6. 5. μισθὸν ἀπέχουσι.

2. Wherein they are Christs servants; or how it comes to pass.

1. By redemption, *servus a servando*, Aust. or *servus, quasi bello servatus.* He that by right of war might justly be put to death, and yet was saved alive, was called servant; and he that delivered him was called his Lord. So when we were, *mancipia peccati & diaboli*, the Devils captives, and slaves of sin, in which condition if we had lived and died after a hard and toilsome service in the mean time, our wages in the end should have been eternal death; Christ by his death, hath conquered sin and Satan, and freed us from that wretched thraldom, to this end, *that being delivered out of the hands of all our enemies, we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, before*

fore him, all the days of our life, Luke 1. 74, 75. Thus the *Iſraelites* were delivered from *Egypt*, the houſe of bondage, to ſerve God. Hence the Preface to the ten commandments; and *David* confeſſeth, *Pſal.* 116. 16, *I am thy ſervant, I am thy ſervant, thou haſt looſed my bonds.* If a man had brought another out of Captivity, or he had ſold himſelf, all his ſtrength or ſervice belonged to the buyer: Chriſt hath bought us from the worſt ſlavery, and with the greateſt price; no thraldom ſo bad as bondage to ſin, no priſon ſo black as Hell; and certainly Chriſts blood is better than any money; not to ſerve him then, is to defraud him of his purchaſe; no bondage ſo great as ours, no price ſo great as Chriſts, and therefore no ſervice ſo great as that which we owe.

2. By the fathers donation or delivery up of them. *John* 17. 6, *I have manifeſted thy name unto the men whom thou gaveſt me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gaveſt them me, and they have kept thy word.* God hath made us, and not we our ſelves, and ſo hath abſolute right to us, and dominion over us; hath given us unto Chriſt that we ſhould ſerve him, as well as be ſaved by him, *Iſa.* 44. 21, *Remember, O Jacob, thou art my ſervant, I have formed thee, thou art my ſervant O* Iſrael: they are given him for a Poſſeſſion, *Pſal.* 2. 8.

3. By voluntary reſignation, and ſurrendring of themſelves to him. They have given themſelves to the Lord that are real Chriſtians,

2 *Cor.*

2 *Cor.* 8. 5. 'Tis by their own conſent and contract, *Rom.* 6. 13. *Yeild up your ſelves unto God, &c.* Chriſt loves to have his right and title eſtabliſhed. By our own conſent we take Chriſt for our Lord and Maſter, and give up our ſelves to him, that we may be no longer at our own diſpoſe; and therefore 'tis not only robbery, but treachery and breach of Covenant, to ſeek our ſelves in any thing; and this reſignation muſt be made out of a ſenſe of Chriſts love to us in his death and ſufferings, 2 *Cor.* 5. 15, *Chriſt died, that they which live ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him who died for them.* We enter upon other ſervices out of hopes, but we enter upon Chriſts ſervice out of thankfulneſs: 'Twas our own voluntary Act, by Marriage-Covenant, we take him for our Lord, our Husband, Guide, Governour and Protector; and as *Sarah* obeyed *Abraham* and called him Lord, ſo we Chriſt: we have bound our ſelves by ſolemn vow and promiſe to be and continue Chriſts faithful ſervants unto the end of our lives; now the word is gone out of our lips, we may not alter it; nor after we have made a vow, enquire what we have to do. He hath the beſt right to our beſt ſervices, by this three-fold title, and a threefold cord is not eaſily broken; our tongues are not our own, to ſpeak what we pleaſe, nor our hearts to think what we pleaſe, nor our hands to do what we liſt. By vertue of theſe and many more titles, we are anothers, and are

bound

bound to live and Act for him, according to his will, and for his glory.

3. What a Lord and Maſter Chriſt is: The Scriptures give us theſe Characters or Properties of Him.

1. He is the moſt abſolute and ſupreme Lord. His ſtile is *King of kings, and Lord of lords*; he hath no ſuperior or co-partner with him in his dominion and government; all other Power and Lordſhip is dependent, and derivative, and ſubordinate.

1. All Power is from him; as, 1. Civil, *Prov.* 8. 15, *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree Juſtice.* 2. Eccleſiaſtical, 2 *Cor.* 10. 8. That power which the Apoſtle had was derived from Chriſt; *For though I ſhould boaſt ſomething more of the Authority which the Lord hath given us for Edification and not for Deſtruction.* 3. Inward and ſpiritual. *Mar.* 16. 20. *They preached every where, the Lord working with them: the opening of the eyes of the blind, quickening the dead, turning them from darkneſs to light*, were the effects of his power: not the parts or piety of the Preacher, but his grace and ſpirit did the work. Laſtly, extraordinary and miraculous power, whereby they confirmed the word; ſigns and wonders were wrought in his name and by his power. When the lame man was healed, and the Apoſtle examined by what power, or by what name they had done it? *Peter* anſwered, *Acts* 4. 10, *Be it known*

known unto you all, that by the name of Jeſus of Nazareth this man doth ſtand before you whole.

2. As all power is derived from him, and dependent on him; ſo 'tis to be uſed and obeyed in ſubordination to him.

1. For him, as the authority of Magiſtrates, Parents, 1 Pet. 2. 13, *Submit to every ordinance of man for the Lords ſake, whether it be to the King as ſupream.* Eph. 6. 1, *Children obey your parents in the Lord: ſo wives to husbands, ſervants to maſters,* Col. 3. 18.

2. According to him, *Acts.* 5 29, the Apoſtle anſwered, *We ought to obey God rather than men.*

3. All other Lords are reſponſible to him, for the uſe and abuſe of that authority, and thoſe gifts they received from him; and are therefore puniſhable by him.

2*dly.* He is an univerſal Lord, Lord of all.

1. In regard of perſons, he is over all, *Rom.* 9. 5. He rules over all nations, perſons, hearts; all other Maſters and Lords are inferiour to him; Eph. 6.9, *And ye maſters, do the ſame things to them* (that is your Servants) *forbearing threatning: knowing that your maſter alſo is in heaven, neither is there reſpect of perſons with him.*

2. In regard of matters and acts, outward, inward, Godward, manward, civil, ſpiritual, all come under his cognizance, *Eph.* 6. 5,6. *Col.* 3.23, *Rom.* 14. 18, in all theſe things we are to ſerve Chriſt.

3. In

3. In regard of places; the three kingdoms of Heaven, Earth and Hell, have no other Lord but Chriſt: Angels and glorified Saints in Heaven, Saints, Sinners, and every creature on Earth, the damned and Devils in Hell, are all his ſubjects.

3*dly.* He is a ſpiritual Lord, for the manner of his rule and government; *John* 18. 36, *My kingdom is not of this world: not from hence.* Not that he governs not in Heaven and Earth, for though his kingdom be not of this world, *Rex tamen eſt in hoc mundo*, Bern. when *Pilate* had openly declared whoſe accuſation it was, Jeſus plainly tells him, that his Kingdom was not ſecular, but ſpiritual; not of this world: So that he nothing intrenched on *Cæſars* right; which he ſaith not to avoid death, but to ſhew that he was unjuſtly accuſed.

4. He is an eternal Lord; *Of the increaſe of his government and peace there ſhall be no end. upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with judgment and juſtice, from henceforth even for ever*, Iſa 9. 7, Luke 1. 33. He is the King immortal, 1 *Tim.* 1. 17. Death the King of terrors, and terror of Kings, is ſubdued by this Lord; not only ſo as never to touch him, but alſo never to hurt any of his Servants: Other Rulers, though they be called gods and lords, yet ſhall dye like men; earthly Monarchs, either by ſome Poiſon or Treaſon, are brought to untimely deaths, at leaſt

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ſome diſeaſe or other will lay their glory in the duſt; but Jeſus Chriſt is yeſterday, to day, and the ſame for ever.

5. He is a mighty Lord, moſt able to do what is good for his Servant, and to ſubdue all perſons and things to himſelf, *Pſal.* 3. 21. He can kill the Soul, and throw both the Body and Soul into Hell; he can ſubdue the hearts of men, even of the deadlieſt enemies, unto his love and obedience; he can protect and ſhelter his Servants from all evil, and beſtow all good things on them, for the world is his and the fulneſs thereof: He hath under his command the forces of all creatures in Heaven and Earth, which he rules as he pleaſes to his own purpoſe; he can at eaſe fruſtrate the harmful intentions, and noiſom qualities of the worſt of them; he can turn their malice into mercy, their hatred into love, yea can bring forth glory to himſelf, and profit to his Servants; not only againſt, but even out of their miſchievous deſignments, as in *Daniel* and the three Children, *&c.*

6. He is a moſt juſt Lord; his is a Scepter of righteouſneſs, *Heb.* 1. 8, his right hand is full of righteouſneſs, *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*, Pſal. 145. 17. In him is exact and perfect integrity and equity, of all his counſels, words and actions; and there is no unrighteouſneſs in him. His will is the rule and ſtandard of juſtice, and whatever he commands is moſt

equal

equal and right, becauſe he wills and commands it.

7. He is a moſt glorious Lord and Maſter; The glory of Kings and Emperours is but a borrowed ray, or ſpark from his Majeſty; the glory of all the *Caſars, &c.* is but a black coal in compariſon of his ſplendor; and when he ſhall appear in his glory, the glow-worms of worldly ſplendor and majeſty ſhall diſappear and be extinguiſhed; the pooreſt Servant he hath ſhall then appear with him in ſuch glory, that the combined excellency of Kings ſhall not be ſo much as a ſhadow to it.

8. He is a moſt gracious Lord; he puts them upon none but ſafe, honourable, and comfortable employments. He puts no more upon them than they can go through; and lays no more upon them than they are able to bear; he knows their mould and frame, remembers they are but duſt; he is Jeſus as well as Lord; a Shepherd as well as a Maſter; he joins his glory and their happineſs together; he never requireth brick from his people, without giving them ſtraw; he will either multiply grace, or diminiſh the temptation: his Grace is always ſufficient for them.

9. He is a wiſe judicious Maſter. A man that ſerves a fickle and unconſtant Maſter, who often changes his mind, has a hard task, and endleſs labour; but a prudent man, who orders his affairs with diſcretion and deliberation, his commands are but once obeyed, his work

is

is ſoon done); what he doth now, anon he muſt undo, and ſo *Syſiphus* like, he is ever doing, and hath never done; he never knows an end of his work: But the Servant of Chriſt is at a good certainty, and knows before-hand what his work muſt be, and what his wages; as his Maſter himſelf is, ſo his Commandments are immutable and invariable, without ſo much as a ſhadow of change, *Jam.* 1. 17. That was a needleſs cavil, and meer peeviſhneſs and ſelfiſhneſs in *Jonah*, *Jonah* 4. 2.

10. He is a moſt knowing and diſcerning Lord. He obſerves the ways and works of his Servants ſo narrowly, that the cloſeſt and ſubtilleſt among them cannot deceive him; he ſpies them in every corner, nay, every corner of their hearts in them; all things are open and naked before him: though now in ſome ſort he be abſent, yet he needs no informer, he knows what every Servant doth in his abſence, and will manifeſt every ones work to all the world: his eyes are as a flame of fire, clearer than ten thouſand ſuns; he takes notice of all their ſervices and hearts, *Rev.* 2. 19, *I know thy works, and charity, and ſervice, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works, and the laſt to be more than the firſt.*

11. He is a pitiful and merciful Lord and Maſter. He hath an eye as pitying as it is piercing; he doth no leſs obſerve the wants and troubles, than the ways and works of his Servants; he is a Father as well as a Maſter; and

As a father pitieth his children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him, Pſal. 103. 13, 14, *And ſpareth them, as a father his ſon that ſerveth him,* Mal. 3. 17, hath more tender bowels than a mother. Iſa. 49. 15. *Can a woman forget her ſucking-child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.* Chriſt is not as the ſlothful man thought, a cruel and hard Maſter, *Matt.* 25. 24, that looks for much work, and gives little encouragement; but is moved with compaſſion towards his Servants, *Matt.* 18. 27, he will not have his Servants complain that they ſerve an hard Maſter.

12. He is a meek and lowly Maſter, condeſcending to ſerve his Servants here and hereafter.

1. Here, *Matt.* 20. 28, *He came not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter.* Luke 22. 27, *Whether is greater, he that ſitteth at meat, or he that ſerveth? is not he that ſitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that ſerveth.* He ſtoopt ſo low as to waſh his Diſciples feet.

2. Hereafter; Luke 12. 37, *Bleſſed are thoſe ſervants, whom the Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find watching: Verily I ſay unto you, That he ſhall gird himſelf, and make them ſit down to meat, and will come forth and ſerve them.* Study, but yet expect not to underſtand, either the comfort or condeſcention of this promiſe, made to the faithful Servants of Chriſt; *He ſhall gird*

gird himself, &c. Lord (saith one) did I not think that the cheer and the attendance were both one, I should say the attendance were infinitely better than the meat. Think what it is for Christ himself to serve at the Table; what is it but infinite delight for the guests to have him set himself to solace them, who is infinite, as in sweetness, so in knowledg, to make his sweetness please them. Nor will the dignity of these Servants be less than their delight, who have Majesty it self to serve them: certainly in Heaven there shall be as many Kings as Subjects.

13. He is a tender and compassionate Lord; *He was made like unto his brethren in all things, sin excepted; and having suffered himself, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted,* Heb. 2. 18. *We have not an high-priest, that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,* Heb 4. 15, and 5. 2, *Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way.* He cannot only συμπαθεῖν, but μετριοπαθεῖν, bear part in our afflictions, but bear with us in our infirmities, being thorowly (and not lightly) touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He is sensible of his servants wrong, when tempted, seduced, (*Rev.* 2. 20, *To seduce my servants*) as well as sensible of their grief when wronged and persecuted; in all their afflictions he is afflicted, and takes the wrongs offered to his

Servants as offered to himſelf; they that hurt them, touch the apple of his eye: he covers with the mantle of his excuſing-love, their unavoidable infirmities. *The ſpirit is willing, but the fleſh is weak.*

14. He is a moſt loving and ſociable Maſter, who puts his Servants upon nothing but what himſelf hath done, or doth before them; he firſt practiceth what he impoſeth on them. He lays no yoke upon them but what he himſelf hath born; leads them in no way, but himſelf hath firſt trodden it: He is not like the *Phariſees* who bind heavy burdens upon others, but will not touch them with one of their fingers, *Matt.* 23. 4; but he does as *Abimelech*, Judg. 9. 48, *What ye have ſeen me do, make haſt, and do as I have done:* or as *Tully* reports of *Cæſar*, that he was never heard to ſay to his Soldiers, *Ite illuc*, but *venite huc.* So Chriſt leads by example, his voice is follow me, *Juvat idem, qui jubet.*

15. He is a good Maſter. As he bears part in their ſufferings, and is a fellow-ſufferer; ſo he is not only their Lord and Maſter, but their helper and fellow-worker; whatever he impoſes on them, he helps and furniſhes them to do it; he puts them to no work, wherein he doth not help them. Herein he goes beyond all other Maſters, who can toil and task their Servants ſufficiently, but cannot ſtrengthen them. Chriſt encourages and aſſiſts them in their work; when they grow faint and weary, he ſtrengthens

ens them; when doubtful, he teaches them; when ſlothful, ſometimes indeed he corrects them, but not to kill, but quicken them; not to deſtroy them, but their ſloth: when they are ſick, he pities and ſpares them; when old, he turns them not out of his ſervice, but the longer they live in it, the more they love it, yea, the more able they are to perform it: In a word, when they dye, he neither ſuffers them to lye ſtill, nor ſends them to ſeek another Maſter; for then they change not their Maſter for another, but their work for a better; or rather for their wages, *Pſal.* 138. 3. *Iſa.* 40. 28, 29, 30, 31. *Joel.* 2. 29.

16. He is a moſt faithful Maſter; he keeps, ſecures and vindicates all his Servants, he preſerves them and provides for them, gives them all things pertaining to life and godlineſs, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4, comforts them with exceeding great and precious promiſes; he feeds them with his own fleſh and blood, he clothes them with his own righteouſneſs, he directs them with his own ſpirit; his Servants ſhall want no good thing, they ſhall neither pine for want, nor ſurfeit with abundance; they ſhall never have ſo much, or ſo little, as to make them unfit for ſervice; Chriſt loves to keep them in working caſe. How can a Servant of Chriſt want proviſion, when as he can make his very work meat and drink unto him; nay, his wants meat and drink? How can they want, whoſe friend hath, and is all things? A Servant of Chriſt may be ſick,

perſecuted, ſcorned, impriſoned, but never unſafe: He may ſuffer evils to touch them, but he never ſuffers evils to hurt them. He viſits them in, and delivers them from all their troubles: He rebukes Kings for their ſakes, and protects them ſafely from all enemies.

17. He is a holy and impartial Lord and Maſter, and takes account of all his ſervants exactly and particularly. He compares himſelf to a King that took an account of his ſervants, *Mat.* 18. 23. *Mat.* 25. 19. After a long time the Lord of thoſe ſervants comes and reckons with them: he will not indulg any in their eaſe and ſloth.

18. He is a moſt bountiful Lord and Maſter, and abundantly rewards any ſervice that's done to him aright, though never ſo little, *Luk.* 19. 17. He pays his ſervants moſt bountifully, *Well done thou good ſervant; becauſe thou haſt been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities*, Mat. 10. 42. *He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, and a righteous man in the name of a righteous man; and whoſoever ſhall give to drink to one of theſe little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a diſciple, verily I ſay unto you he ſhall in no wiſe loſe his reward.*

19. This Lord is the moſt dreadful adverſary, he will ſharply and ſeverely puniſh evil ſervants, *who ſay in their hearts, the Lord delays his coming*, Mat. 24. 48, 49, 50, 51. & 25. 30. *Caſt ye the unprofitable ſervant into utter darkneſs, there*

there shall be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. He that knew his Lords will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes, Luk. 12. 47. 1 Thes. 1. 8. *He will come in flaming fire to take vengeance on his adversaries. And they shall call to the rocks to fall on them, and to hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*, Rev. 6. 16.

20. He is a most desirable and incomparable Lord, and such a Master as the world never knew; for he makes all his faithful servants sharers with him in his wealth and honour. *They shall enter into the joy of their Lord*, Mat. 25. 21. Sit in Thrones with him, wear never-fading Crowns, and inherit his everlasting Kingdom. They that now follow him, shall be where he is, and the same glory he hath they shall have for ever. *Cadit mundus, non cadit Christianus, quia non cadit Christus.* Aust. Let the world fall, yet a Christian falls not, as long as Christ stands. Whereas Satan chuses the subtilleſt he can find, and leaven'd through, to do his work, and send on his errand; for he cannot make a *Mercury* out of every block; he is not able to give a man understanding, wisdom and abilities for his work, neither can he increase or improve any mans parts and gifts; he must have instruments ready to his hand; he can but put them forward, and tempt them; he will give such as are strong and crafty, many motives to serve him,

but he cannot furniſh them with ſtrength or craft to ſerve. But our Lord Chriſt ſometimes chuſeth the ſimpleſt, the meaneſt, the plaineſt men, fiſher-men, to do his work; for he can give gifts to men which they have not, and raiſe the parts which they have; he can make himſelf a *Mercury*, a meſſenger out of any block; Chriſt can ſend a fool of his errand, and cauſe him to do it wiſely. He can cauſe the ſtammering tongue to ſpeak plain, and the plaineſt man to ſpeak the higheſt Rhetorick; when *Moſes* complains of a ſlow tongue, he can ſay, *I will be thy mouth, and teach thee what thou ſhalt ſay*, Exod. 4. 12. If he finds us not fit to do his buſineſs, he can make us fit. If Chriſt pleaſe, he can make a man maſter of his trade, before or as ſoon as ever he is ſervant to it.

Thus without the wiſdom of the world, Chriſt overcomes the wiſdom of the world, and *by the fooliſhneſs of Preaching* (as men count fooliſhneſs) *ſaveth thoſe that believe*, 1 Cor. 1. 21. The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than men, *i.e.* thoſe inſtruments which Chriſt employs, how fooliſh ſoever men count them, ſhall foil all the wiſdom of man.

Uſes of this Doctrine, *That Chriſt is a true Believers Lord and Maſter.*

1. Uſe of Information and Inſtruction.

1. It informs us that Chriſt is Lord as well as Jeſus, our Soveraign as well as our Saviour. He

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is both Lord and Chriſt, *Act.* 2. 36. And we are not only to look at benefit by him, but ſervice to him; and not only come to him (as *Zebedees* Sons, *Mar.* 10. 35.) ſaying, *Maſter, we would that thou ſhouldſt do for us whatſoever we ſhall deſire*; but with *Saul*, fall at his feet, ſaying, *Lord, what wouldſt thou have us to do?* we will do for thee whatſoever thou ſhalt command. We ſhould not only come to him for eaſe for our ſouls, but to take his yoke on our necks and follow him, *Mat.* 11. 28, 29. Men would have Chriſt to redeem them, and Satan rule them; Chriſt to ſave, & ſin to lord it. If it be not the language of their tongues, yet 'tis of their lives with moſt men, οὐ θέλομεν τοῦτον βασιλεῦσαι, *We will not have this man to reign over us*, Luk. 19. 14. there it ſticks, the carnal mind is enmity to the Law; luſt cannot endure reſtraint, and therefore men moſt oppoſe Chriſts *Nomothetick* power; and carnal hearts are ready to ſay, our lips are our own, who is lord over us? to be controul'd for every word, every thought, every action, we cannot endure it. O conſider, Chriſt hath many enemies, but they are his chief enemies that withſtand his reigning: *Thoſe mine enemies that would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring them hither and ſlay them before me.* By becoming Chriſts ſervants, we do not caſt off, but only change our yokes.

2. It's not enough to be in the Church, and outwardly admitted and ſtiled Chriſts ſervants, but we muſt be really his, and in heart; Chriſt keeps

keeps no ſervants only to wear a livery-cloak for ſecurity in ſinning. As he is not a titular Lord, ſo neither are his ſervants titular ſervants; to ſpeak ſervice, and live in oppoſition to him; to call him maſter, and do the work of his enemy; to be in the skin a Chriſtian, and in the core a heathen; to have an outſide verbal complimental profeſſion, and contradict it with an unholy converſation, is no better than a renouncing of Chriſt. 'Tis no advantage to bear the marks of Chriſt in our bodies, and to have no fruit of it in our ſouls; this is but to clothe our ſelves with the leaves of the vine, without partaking of the ſap. Paganiſm and looſe profeſſion, ſhall fare alike when Chriſt comes to judgment.

3. There are divers kinds of Chriſts ſervants, and there will be great diverſity in their end.

1. Some for honour, ſome for diſhonour, 2 *Tim.* 2. 20. as veſſels in an houſe.

2. Some ſincere and good, ſome evil and unprofitable, *Mat.* 24. 46, 48. ſome faithful and wiſe, and are found well doing; ſome evil and riotous, *Mat.* 25. 21, 26. ſome good and faithful, ſome wicked, and ſloathful, and unprofitable.

3. Some Temporary, that abides not in the houſe for ever, ſome that abide there, *Joh.* 8. 35. There will be great diverſity found betwixt Chriſts ſervants in the end, betwixt thoſe that only cry, Lord, Lord, and thoſe that do the will of God, *Mat.* 7. 22, 23. & 24. 47, 51. He ſhall

ſhall make the one ruler over his goods, the other cut him aſunder, *Mat.* 25. 21,28,30

4. It may inform us what the ſtate of a Chriſtian is:

1. He is not his own, not *ſui juris*, but a ſervant to Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. *Ye are not your own*; and 1 *Cor.* 7. 22. He that is moſt free in other reſpects, is Chriſts ſervant; no man can have any propriety in himſelf, or power over himſelf; but what is derived from this abſolute Lord, and ſtands in full ſubordination to him: Therefore it belongs to Chriſt to be the abſolute diſpoſer of us and all things; he may do with his own what he pleaſes, and uſe it to the pleaſure of his own will; who would interpoſe, or any way hinder Chriſt from the free diſpoſal of his own? not any co-partner, for there is none; nor we our ſelves, for we are wholly his, therefore it is not poſſible for him to do us any wrong however he ſhall uſe us; therefore no man ſhould repine at his diſpoſal of him, but all ſhould acquieſce in his diſpoſing-will; nor do any thing for ſelfiſh ends, which is injurious to the will or intereſt of Chriſt. Chriſt hath full power to do what he liſt with us or ours: How far ſhould any of his ſervants be from expecting that he ſhould give an account of any of his actions to them? it ſhould ſuffice them, that whatever befalls them, it is from the Lord. *The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away*; whenſoever he removes any comforts: if we find our ſelves too ready to ſay to inſtruments, as the owners of

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the Colt, *What do ye looſing or removing it?* we ſhould be ſilenced, though not with that anſwer which was returned by the Diſciples to them, *the Lord hath need of it*; yet with this, he ſees it needful for us, that thus it ſhould be; whenſoever he commands the hardeſt duties, inflicts the ſmarteſt ſtripes, *&c.* every ſervant of Chriſt ſhould ſtop their murmuring-mouths with this, the Lord will have it thus; and as *Act.* 21. 14, *The will of the Lord be done.*

2. Neither are the good things we poſſeſs, our own; he that is not owner of himſelf, is owner of nothing; all that we have is properly his, as well as we; for no man can have more title to any thing than to himſelf; we have not any thing, nor can have, which is not as much from Chriſt as we, ſo is not as much his. Therefore we ſhould not diſpoſe of any thing we have, but for his intereſt and ends; how careful and wary ſhould we be in uſing the Creatures! all the comforts we enjoy are the goods of this Lord; we are but ſtewards of them; what we uſe muſt be uſed for, not againſt our Lord. Learning, riches, honour, are from him, and therefore ſhould be for him; all our enjoyments are but borrowed, we muſt therefore uſe them well; not ſpot or ſtain, not tear and cut them by ſin, leſt we be aſhamed when we ſhould return them back to the owner, and give him an account of them, it may be with joy, and not with grief.

3. Neither may any Chriſtian think himſelf Lord of the Church, or his Brethren, 1 *Pet.* 5. 3.

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Neither as being lords over Gods heritage, but being enſamples to the flock. The word κατακυριεύοντες, *dominantes*, is not to be underſtood of tyrannizing and bearing unlawful rule, or uſurped dominion (as *Bellarmine* would have it) but exerciſing Lordſhip, the ſame which Chriſt forbids the Apoſtles in the ſame word, *Mat.* 20.25. as *Bernard* tells Pope *Eugenius*, *Ne dictum ſola humilitate putes, non veritate vox domini eſt, reges gentium dominantur eis vos autem non ſic. Planum eſt, apoſtolis inter dicitur dominatus*, not over-ruling. It doth not only forbid the abuſe of their authority, or imperiouſly commanding of their own inventions, inſtead of the Doctrine of the Goſpel; or carping Magiſterially and inſolently towards Gods people, (as *Amet.*) But the uſe of that authority in the Eccleſiaſtical office, which it is lawful for Princes to exerciſe towards their ſubjects, (ſaith *Beza*) *Omnes enim eſſe unius legiſlatoris & domini ſervos, &c.* Have Miniſters no authority? Yes, ſaith he, not over the conſciences of men, but only as meſſengers of Chriſt, whoſe is all the power of commanding. No Church, no Council can make Laws but in Chriſt, the compound and the ſimple word are uſed (one by *Matthew* and *Mark*, the other by *Luke*) in the ſame ſenſe; ſo that κάτα adds no Emphaſis to it; all kind of Temporal rule is ſimply forbidden them.

1. No Chriſtian can bind the conſcience in internal or elicite acts, 2 *Cor.* 1.24. *Not that we have dominion over your faith, but as helpers of your*

your joy, Οὐχ ὅτι κυριεύομεν ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως, (*i. e.* τῆς ὑμῶν πίστεως), the Apostle adds this, lest he should seem to have spoken too imperiously: *q. d.* That I said, I therefore came not that I might spare you; take thus, Not that I could by my own authority do any thing with Religion, and in binding or relaxing your consciences, but that I might be Gods Minister to comfort you, *&c.*

2. Nor can he command the outward imperate Acts of Conscience otherwise then by power civil, or spiritual, from Christ, *Pro.* 8. 15, *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice.* 2 Cor. 10. 8. 1 Thes. 5. 12. *We beseech you Brethren, know them who labour among you, and are over you in the Lord.*

3. As a Christian no man hath civil power over his Brother, or the Church, or over men, *Mat.* 20. 26. *It shall not be so among you,* that as the Gentiles exercise authority and dominion over them.

1. As a Christian, he hath no legislative, but only applicative power, or executive in the Church; a Christian must not make Laws in his house, but keep and execute his Laws.

2. As such, He hath no coercive power over his fellow servants.

That natural or civil power that any Christian hath otherways over his Brother, is to rule under, for, and according, or like to Christ, *Philemon* 16. *Not now as a servant but above a servant, a brother, beloved, especially to me, How much*

much more to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord? 1 *Cor.* 7. 39. *She is at liberty to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord.* Ministers are not owners of the house, but stewards in the house, Laws are committed to us, and must not be excogitated by us.

Only Christ can ordain laws to bind the Conscience; mans laws bind not as they are mans, but as they are back't by Christ; nor can any but Christ so give laws to which we should be obedient, as withal to make us obedient to the laws which he gives. Christ only can write his laws in the heart: No man should prefer the will or interest of the greatest mortal man or dearest friend, nor the publick interest of States, before, or plead it against the will and interest of this great Lord.

Neither may we give nor receive ambitious or flattering titles of honour, *Mat.*23 8,9,10, *Be not ye called Masters, for one is your Lord and Master, even Christ:* we should so acknowledg a superiority among men, as to be fearful of causing pride in them, and that they may know themselves not to be absolute Lords, but derivatively and *secundum quid*. *Herod* became worms-meat, who but just now was a meer idol and cryed up, *&c.* God would not bear it.

5. It informs us therefore how consistible Christs service is with the service of others.

1. It dissolves not, but confirms natural and civil Lordship and subjection, as between master

ſter and ſervant, 1 *Tim.* 6. 1, 2, *Let as many ſervants as are under the yoke, count their own maſters worthy of all honour,* (but what if they be both believers, are they not Brethren) yes; *and they that have believing maſters, let them not deſpiſe them, becauſe they are Brethren, but rather do them ſervice becauſe they are believing and beloved, partakers of the ſame benefit,* *Titus* 2. 9. Between Magiſtrate and Subject. Rom. 13. 1, *Let every ſoul be ſubject to the Higher Powers.* 2 *Pet.* 3. 3, *Submit your ſelves to every ordinance of man for the Lords ſake.*

2. This our relation to Chriſt as maſter, regulates the ſervice of others: *Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.* Eph. 6. 1. For the Lord is the author of the authority of Fathers, and therefore we muſt yield ſuch obedience as he will have us. This *(in the Lord)* implies both a commandment of Childrens obedience from the Lord, and a reſtriction or limitation in thoſe things which are not againſt the Lord: that they ſo far obey their Parents, as they ſwerve not from the true worſhip and ſervice of God.

3. This ſervice of Chriſt excludes all abſolute and unneceſſary ſubjection to Creatures, *Luke* 16. 13. *No man can ſerve two Maſters.* He may ſubordinately, but not abſolutely, for God will have the ſervice of the whole man. 1 *Cor.* 7. 21, 23, *Art thou called being a ſervant? care not for it: but if thou may'ſt be made free, uſe it rather. Ye are bought with a price, be not*

ye

ye the servants of men. If ye be at liberty, do not of your own accord make your selves servants, but consecrate your selves intirely, Body and Soul, to the service of Christ; or if ye be servants to men, that is in a state of servitude, remember still that above and before all, ye are the servants of Christ, and therefore see ye do nothing to the obedience of men, which is contrary to that which ye owe to Christ; and as touching your Soul and Conscience, subject and enslave your selves to no man living, depend absolutely upon none but Christ and his word; all our obedience to earthly Lords must be only such as this Lord allows, and only in the Lord; the greatest Lords in the world are but *regula regulata*, Christ is the only *regula regulans*; they the rule, ruled; he ruling.

6. To inform us that Christians are Christs servants yet somewhat more, or with some special exceptions. *John* 15. 15, *Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth, but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.* They are not only servants, but friends; they call Christ Lord and Master, he calls them not servants but friends: not servants but free-men, yea sons, *John* 8. 36. *The servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.* Gal. 4 7. *Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son: and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.* Not a servant, that is, under the ceremonies

and bondage of the Law; but a Son, having received the adoption by Chriſt, the eternal Son of God, who was ſent to redeem us, that he might purchaſe, and graciouſly communicate the right of ſonſhip, (which he hath by nature) to every true believer. *And becauſe ye are Sons, God hath ſent forth the ſpirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba father.* We are in ſuch ſort free, and ſo ſet at liberty, as that we muſt be governed by the Spirit of Chriſt which reigneth in our hearts, and teacheth us the true ſervice of the Father; but this is not to ſerve, but rather to enjoy true liberty, as becometh Sons and Heirs.

7. It teaches us, that all doctrines and practices are to be abhorred, which derogate from the dignity of this our Lord and Maſter. 1. Doctrines, eſpecially the Popiſh, which deprave our redemption purchaſed by this Lord, by the doctrine of merits; the worſhip due to this Lord, with the doctrine of image and adoration, and the Saints interceſſion: The authority of this Lord, by the doctrine of the *Popes* headſhip and pardoning of ſins, and many ſuch doctrines, not only of the *Papiſts*, but of others nearer to us.

2. The practices of vile and wicked men. We ſhould make it our buſineſs and only Plot to promote his honour and ſervice in the world, and endure nothing that would eclipſe and impair his glory: He who touches that, ſhould touch the apple of our eye; look upon his reproach

proach as caſt upon our ſelves, mourning for that diſhonour offered to him which we cannot redreſs; 'tis againſt both Chriſtianity and Humane ingenuity, to ſuffer him to be abuſed whom we have undertaken to ſerve: This neither agrees with honeſty nor honour; 'tis indeed not only a ſin but a ſhame: Hardly is any Servant ſo low ſpirited, as to think it conſiſtent with his credit to ſerve a diſgraced Maſter; they that truly call Chriſt Lord, will never endure that his glory ſhould ſuffer from others, much leſs from themſelves.

3. Our own unſuitable practices. *A ſervant of Chriſt muſt not be a ſon of Belial*; every one is under a yoke ſtill; Chriſt does not give his ſervants leave to ſin, but liberty to ſerve God; Chriſt came not to free us from the Law, but ſin; from the ſervice of the Devil, not from the ſervice of God: He came not to make the Law leſs ſtrict, or ſin leſs odious, or us leſs holy; freedom from wrath and Hell is a priviledg, but from duty and obedience is none; becauſe we are made free by Chriſt, we are to be more apt and ready to diſcharge the duty we owe to God and man: *in maxima libertate minima licentia*, a great deal of liberty by Chriſt, and yet the ſtrongeſt ingagement to ſervice that may be. They whoſe lives are full of *Epicuriſme*, Atheiſme, worldlineſs, 'tis not a pin to chuſe whether they be Pagans, or Chriſtians; for acting thus heathenihly, thus brutiſhly, they do but pollute that ſacred and

worthy name; the Apoſtle ſaith, I am not (ἀνομ& ut ἔνομ&) 1 Cor. 9. 21. *Not without the law to God, but under the law to Chriſt.* This leads to

Second uſe of reprehenſion: It may ſerve to reprove three ſorts.

1. Thoſe that endure not to hear of Chriſts Lordſhip and commands, that will not acknowledg this dominion of Chriſt, nor let him be Lord in his own houſe, but do what in them lies to deprive him of that honour to which he hath ſo good a right. But who deny Chriſts Lordſhip?

1. They that will not hear his voice, obey his call, accept his invitations in the Goſpel; he inviteth them to himſelf, prays them to be reconciled to God through him, intreats them to come and put themſelves under his government, and take his yoke on them, and they will not hear, but in effect ſay, *We are Lords, we will not come at thee?* Jer. 2. 31. We are well enough, and ſhall do well enough without him, and what needs ſuch care and ſtrictneſs? He comes, and waits, and knocks at their doors, but they ſlight him and will not open: He prays them that they will look into their hearts, mind their Souls, conſider their eternal condition, but they quench the Spirit, ſmother the light, and reſiſt all theſe motions; they will not come to him, nor ſuffer him to come into them, that they may have life.

2. Thoſe

2. Thoſe that addict themſelves to ſtrong and inordinate deſires of liberty, which is the worſt ſlavery; that will not ſubmit to his government; quarrelling at duties rather than performing them; thinking it a kind of happineſs to be free: and that there is no freedom but in ſinning, and following the bent and ſway of their own hearts, and being Lords of their own actions; and dream of an exemption from all kind of Law, but their own luſts; they would he above all checks and controul, and have ſcope and room for their own luſts. *Promiſe themſelves liberty*, 2 Pet. 2. 19. Men would have it at this, to be at their own diſpoſe, and to be anſwerable to none that would call them to account, and therefore that will not obey his laws and commands.

3. Such as in a proud contempt and obſtinacy againſt reproof and inſtruction, do caſt off all reſpect and obedience to Chriſt; they cannot endure reſtraints, are as bullocks unaccuſtomed to the yoke, *Jer.* 31. 18. Are all for breaking bonds and diſſolving cords. *Pſal.* 2. 4. Burſting the yoke altogether. *Jer.* 5. 5. They cannot endure to hear of denying their faſhions, renouncing their luſts and pleaſures forſaking their vain, worldly, wanton thoughts, and ways; what every thought, every deſire, every word, muſt be under a Law! So much time ſpent in duties, ſuch gravity in converſation, ſuch awe in their ſpeeches! No vain

licentious Spirits will not be clogged and yoked thus, *what a wearineſs is it*, Mal. 1. 13. Sacrifice upon Sacrifice, ſuch waiting upon God they cannot endure, their ſpirits are impatient, and recoil with the more violence upon reproof; and ſtorm and vex, which argues much non-ſubjection to the Lord Chriſt. *Hear ye and give ear, be not proud, Jer.* 13. 15. Theſe are flat refuſers. *Luke* 19. 14. *We will not have this man to reign over us.*

Secondly, Such as name themſelves Chriſts ſervants, and are content to wear his livery, but do not mind this ſtate cordially, and follow it conſtantly.

1. Such as are ignorant concerning the object, manner and points of this ſervice. How ſhall men ſerve one whom they know not? He that knows not his Landlord cannot pay his Rent; they follow the faſhion of the Country, and in a blind ſuperſtitious manner conform to the worſhip of the place, not conſidering why, nor whom it is they ſerve, but offer ſacrifice, as the *Athenians* to the unknown God; worſhip an Idol rather than Chriſt: or as Chriſt tells the *Samaritans*, *ye worſhip ye know not what.*

2. Fair promiſers and pretenders, but ſlow performers; as, *Mat.* 21. 30. When his father bid him, *go work to day in my Vineyard*, he anſwered, *I go ſir, and went not:* ſo many whoſe ſervice is like *Ephraims* goodneſs, *Hoſea* 6. 4. As a morning cloud and early dew, it quickly

quickly vaniſheth, but let us take heed we do not gloze with him, as we do one with another; nor flatter him with our lips, when our heart is far from him; we are deceived, if we think that this Lord will be mocked with hollow and empty promiſes and proteſtations. We live in a wonderous complemental age, wherein ſcarce any other word is ſo ready in every mouth, as your ſervant, and at your ſervice, when all is but meerly formal without any purpoſe; or many times not ſo much as a ſingle thought of doing any ſerviceable office to thoſe men, to whom we profeſs ſo much ſervice. However we are one towards another, yet with the Lord there is no dallying, it behoveth us to be real; good words and fair ſpeeches ſerve not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *Rom.* 16. 18.

3. Partial, hypocritical, temporary ſervants. Some divide between the ſervice of Chriſt and of ſin, like the falſe mother that would have the child divided, as *Cambden* reports of *Redwald* King of the Eaſt *Saxons*, the firſt Prince of this Nation that was Baptized; yet in the ſame Church, he had one Alter for Chriſtian Religion, another for Heatheniſh. So too many are of Mungril Religion, halting between Chriſt and *Baal*. *Heteroclites* in Religion, this is to ſet the Ark of God and *Dagon* together; which God will never endure, he came not for one half of thy heart, if Sin and *Devil* have the other half.

How much hypocriſy is there in men! many like the Souldiers, that bowed to Chriſt, and mocked him, give their outſides to Chriſt, their inſides to all uncleanneſs; that as *Luther* ſaith of *Cain*, give *opus perſonæ Deo*, but not *perſonam*; their cap and knee to God, but themſelves to all ſin and iniquity; this is the Capital ſin of this age. And then how many are but temporary, of whom we may juſtly ſay, what *Nabal* did unjuſtly of *David*, there are many ſervants now-adays that break away every man from his Maſter. Yeſterday Gods people, and to day are turned knaves. *Better they had never known the way of Righteouſneſs*, 2 Peter 2. 21. A relapſe makes their condition worſe. He that firſt ſerved ſin, and then turned to the ſervice of Chriſt, and afterwards falls again to the ſervice of ſin, proclaims to all the World that he eſteems that better; O how great affront is this to Chriſt! *John* 6. 66. *From that time many of his diſciples went away, and walked no more with him.*

3. Such are to be reproved, that lay claim to this honourable title, and yet indeed ſerve other maſters. There are many of whom we may ſay too truly, as it is Recorded of the *Samaritans*. 2 Kings 17. 33. *They feared the Lord, and ſerved their own gods.*

1. Some ſerve themſelves and not Chriſt, ſet up themſelves as Idols, and do what ſeems good in their own eyes; and make their will

their

their rule, their luſt their Law. This is (αυτολατρία) ſelf-worſhip, ſelf-Idolatry, which is the greateſt and worſt of all; It is the greateſt curſe under Heaven, for God to give a man over to himſelf to live as he liſt, *Pſal.* 81. 11, 12. *Rom.* 1. 26. the judgment of the hardned *Jews* and blinded *Gentiles*. We read of one given over to the Devil for his good, 1 *Cor.* 5. 5, but never any given over to himſelf, but for his damnation. *Auſtin* prays, *libera me domine a memetipſo*, ſelf is mans greateſt and moſt dangerous enemy; we are naturally ſelf-deſtroyers; without ſelf-denyal, no Salvation.

2. Thoſe that ſerve men, not the Lord. Not that it is contrary to the ſervice of Chriſt, to be in that civil relation or ſubjection to men, as ſervants to their Maſters, *&c.* But as the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 7. 23. *Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the ſervants of men.* That is, (ſaith *Ambroſe*) ſubject not your conſciences to the ſuperſtitious inventious of men in Gods worſhip, that build their Religion on mans bare Authority, as *Papiſts*; or be not ſervants to the luſts of wicked men; ſuch are reproved as ſerve men, when they run in a croſs line to Gods will. Such were the ſubjects of *Nebuchadnezzar*, that at the command of the King, worſhipped the golden image, and ſerved the King, not the Lord; ſuch was *Pilate*, that for fear of diſpleaſing *Cæſar*, delivered up Chriſt to be crucified, though he knew him to be innocent; ſuch were the Nobles of *Cambyſes*, who having

a luſt to marry his own Siſter; He ſends for all his Counſel, and asked them, if they had any Law in *Perſia*, to allow him to marry his own Siſter? They anſwered that there was no ſuch Law; but yet there was another Law, that the Kings of *Perſia* might do what they liſt; theſe Nobles were ſlaves to the luſt of *Cambyſes*. O that we had not many amongſt us, that ſell their Conſciences, and their Religion, and their Salvation, to be Panders to the luſtful, covetous and ambitious deſires of great men: menſervers, and men pleaſers, are worthy of ſharp reprehenſion, *Epheſ.* 6. 6.

3. Such as ſerve not the Lord, but their own belly, *Rom.* 16. 18, *Whoſe god is their belly.* *Phil.* 3. 19, *Love their pleaſures more than God*; that ſerve and fulfill the luſts of the fleſh; ſuch an one that *lives in pleaſure, is dead while he lives*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 6. Ye cannot make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfill the luſts thereof, and fulfill the will of God too, *Rom.* 13. *ult.* to rot in pleaſures, makes men utterly uncapable of ſerving the Lord, *Tit.* 3. 3. Serving divers luſts and pleaſures, which is the worſt ſlavery; to walk after our own luſts, is to ſeek to cheriſh that which Chriſt came to deſtroy; and ſo go about to defeat our Redeemer, and hinder him from obtaining his purpoſe in our hearts: What a Chriſtian and yet ſenſual! A Chriſtian and yet proud! A Chriſtian believing in Chriſt, a man of ſorrows, and yet given to pleaſures! What a Chriſtian and yet worldly!

4. Such

4. Such as ſerve the world, and yet pretend to ſerve Chriſt: Chriſt tells you it cannot be; *Ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon*, *Mat.* 6. 24. 'tis impoſſible to join theſe together. Thoſe that are ſlaves to the *Naaman* of iniquity, that do not only poſſeſs money, but are poſſeſſed of money; that with *Judas* will ſell Chriſt for thirty pieces of ſilver; that riſe early and lye down late, and eat the bread of carefulneſs; that will compaſs Sea and land to get gain; theſe make gold their God; their covetouſneſs is juſtly termed Idolatry, *Col.* 3. 5. Alas, my Brethren, what is their in the world that it ſhould be ſo much coveted, and heaven ſlighted? What hath the world done for its moſt faithful ſervants? How oft have we heard them complaining at laſt, O the world hath deceived me, and undone me; it flattered me in my proſperity, and now utterly caſt me off in my neceſſity? Ah, if I had ſerved the Lord as faithfully as I have ſerved the world, he would not have caſt me off at laſt, nor have left me thus comfortleſs and hopeleſs in my depth of miſery.

5. Time-ſervers, that change their Religion with the times, are not ſervants of the Lord; their Religion is like a piece of wax, to be moulded into any frame, according as the times alter: Such as will be Superſtitious if the times be ſo; that will be devout or atheiſtical according to the times. It was the ſpeech of a time-ſerver, that was ſaid to be ſpoken

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by the King of *Navarre* to *Beza*, *That he would launch no further into the sea of Religion, than he might be sure to return safe in the haven.* This is the right Picture of a time-server; as many turned *Protestants* in K. *Edward*'s days, and *Papists* in Q. *Maries*.

Lastly, Those that serve the worst Master, that is sin. 'Tis indeed one thing to be a sinner, and another to be the servant of sin; that is, one that gives himself over to the service of sin, that is bound Apprentice to sin. The difference was great between *Paul* and *Ahab*; *Paul* was sold under sin, but it was against his will; but *Ahab* sold himself willingly to work wickedness: How many such servants of sin are there, as the Centurions servant served him, if sin bid go, they go; such servants are swearers and drunkards, that are at the service of their oaths and cups. This is a most shameful and pernicious service, for it is to serve the Devil, *Joh.* 8. 44. O that the world would believe this, that when they serve this or that lust, they serve the Devil. *Cyprian* brings in the Devil upbraiding Christ, *Ostende mihi tot servos, qui tibi, &c.* Shew me, if thou canst, so many servants that have served thee so diligently and willingly, as I can shew that have served me. Can Satan give you better wages, as *Saul* said to his followers? *Can the son of Jesse make you captains of hundreds, and captains over thousands, give you vineyards, and olive-yards:* &c. 1 *Sam.* 22. 7. Alas! if sin had

had not put out your eyes, as the *Philiſtines* did by *Sampſon*, that you cannot ſee the vileneſs and curſedneſs of it, you would never grind in its mill; for the wages of ſin is death.

3. Uſe of Exhortation, two Branches.

1. To all, to perſwade them to eſteem, chuſe, and embrace Chriſts ſervice.

2. To Chriſts ſervants, to take care to be ſuch ſervants, and perform ſuch ſervice as ſhall be found good and faithful, approved by Chriſt.

1. Is Chriſt ſuch a Lord as you have heard? then let every one of us be prevailed with to take him for our Lord, and give up our ſelves to him, and become his ſervants this day; we muſt either reſign up our ſelves to this excellent Lord, or we cannot be true Chriſtians, 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. this is the eſſence of Chriſtianity, and life of Religion, and marrow of Profeſſion. To wear the badg and livery of Chriſt in external profeſſion without this, is nothing but a dead carcaſs, an empty ſhadow, and will turn to our greater condemnation another day. That which will be enquired after at the great day, is not who owned Chriſt as Lord in profeſſion, but who honoured Chriſt as Lord by real ſubjection and reſignation of themſelves unto him: The great queſtion will be, Whether did Chriſt reign over us, and bring us under his Law and Dominion; and upon the deciſion of this important queſtion depends the

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everlaſting ſtate of our ſouls and bodies in the next world. If you now ſay unto Chriſt, We are Lords, we will not come at thee; depart from us, we deſire not the knowledg of thy ways; or as *Pharoah*, *Who is the Lord, that I ſhould obey him?* He will ſay unto you at the laſt day, *Depart from me ye curſed, I know you not*; nor will your crying, Lord, Lord, then any thing avail you. O then let it be your reſolution now to reſign your ſelves to this gracious Saviour; take him for your Lord and Soveraign; *Kiſs the Son, ſerve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.* O that your hearts would once at laſt ſay, as 'tis foretold of Goſpel times, *Iſa.* 44. 5. *I am the Lords, other Lords have had dominion over me, but henceforth by thee only will I make mention of thy name.* Iſa. 26. 13, *We will not ſay any more to the work of our hands, nor to the luſts of our hearts,* (to the world, the fleſh, or to ſin) *ye are our gods, for with thee (O Lord) poor loſt creatures find mercy,* Hoſ. 14. 3. Whatever your neighbours, acquaintance or kindred, let them chuſe whom they will ſerve, yet we are reſolved for our part, we will ſerve the Lord, *Joſh.* 24. 15.

O my friends, what ſay you to this motion? what anſwer give you to this invitation? is it not moſt reaſonable and conſiderable? you are preſt to come to Chriſt, and take his yoke, and bow the knee before him, *&c.* What will you do? will every one of you give up him-

himſelf to Chriſt, reſign ſoul and body to the ſervice of this glorious Lord? Have you found or ever heard of any thing in him that may deter you? what iniquity have you ſeen in him that you keep at diſtance from him, and walk after vanity? Is he not worthy of your love? not good enough to be your Maſter? can you beſtow your ſelves better? employ your ſelves more profitably? what ſticks it at? would you take time to conſider of it, and defer your reſolutions to another day? ſo you have done too long already, and ventur'd too far by your delays: *To day if you will hear his voice, then harden not your hearts: Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near*: He now ſaith, *hearken unto me, and I will make a covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David: Encline your ear, come unto me: Hear, and your ſoul ſhall live: why do you ſpend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, eat ye that which is good, and let your ſoul delight it ſelf in fatneſs.* Alas ye feed on huſks and chaff till you return to Chriſt. *Iſa* 55. 2, 3, 4, 7. *How long ye ſimple ones will ye love ſimplicity, and fools delight in folly? turn ye at my reproof: Forſake the fooliſh and live; and go in the way of underſtanding. O that you were wiſe, and would underſtand theſe things, and conſider your latter end. O that there were ſuch hearts in you,* &c. *O that ye knew the things that belong unto*

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your peace in this your day, before they be hid from your eyes. O when ſhall it once be? what is your reſolution? ſhall Jeſus Chriſt be your Lord and Maſter, or ſhall he not? Take heed how you refuſe him that ſpeaks from heaven; do not (as you want Chriſt) deſpiſe this loving invitation, and make light of this gracious offer, leſt his wrath be kindled in his breaſt, and you periſh. He that hath ſo long held forth his Scepter of Grace, yet ſtands waiting for your return, yet ſtretcheth forth his arms to embrace you, yet opens his very heart to entertain you: Hark, he bids you come and lodg your ſouls in his warm boſom; yet he calls by his Word, yet he ſtrives by his Spirit; and follows you with checks of conſcience, and renews his mercies on you every morning; would fain draw you with cords of love, if it would be. But it will not be always thus, his patience will not always wait; his Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man; the door of mercy ſhall not always ſtand open; *When once the maſter of the houſe is riſen up, and hath ſhut to the door, and ye begin to ſtand without, and to knock at the door, ſaying, Lord, Lord, open to us*; then 'tis too late, *Luk.* 13. 25. O come to Chriſt now or never, do it this day, or you may never be invited again: Hear now Chriſt beſpeaks and wooes thee, ſinner; Caſt down thy weapons of rebellion, ſurrender thy ſoul to me; give me thy heart, ſubmit to my government; I will paſs by all thy former reſiſt-

reſiſtance, and put up all the wrongs thou haſt done me, I will remember thy iniquities no more, but paſs an act of everlaſting oblivion upon them; O look unto me and be ye ſaved.

This is my buſineſs with you (my beloved) at this time; this is mine errand to your Souls: What anſwer ſhall I return from you to him that ſent me? The great work (you know) of us Miniſters, is to perſwade men to become Chriſts covenanting Servants, to conſent to his Laws, and acknowledg his Lordſhip; our way to win your hearts, is to tell you what he is; ſome little hath been ſpoken, but not the thouſand part of the excellencies of this incomparable Lord; *O he is the chiefeſt of ten thouſand, his name is wonderful:* he is God and Man in one perſon: he is Man, that you may not be afraid of him; God, that he may be able to do you good: *He is the Lord of lords, and King of kings*; *Heir of all things*, *Saviour of the world*, &c. 'Tis infinite condeſcention of love in him, to treat with you, or intreat your conſent that he may be your Lord.

This being a matter of greateſt importance, *and knowing the terror of the Lord, let me perſwade you*; for that end I intreat you, to preſs upon your ſelves, and improve in your retirements, theſe conſiderations as motives.

1. Motive. Yeild up your ſelves to the ſervice of the Lord Chriſt, or you are unjuſt, you do him open wrong. Equity and juſtice re-

quires that you render to all their due; *jus cuiq, tribuere*, is the first and most proper act of justice; *Tribute to whom tribute, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour*, Rom. 13.7. It is a common principle among you, which nature teacheth, that you deal righteously with men, owe no man any thing, do no man wrong; let every one have that which of right appertaineth to him: And if we may not deny unto *Cæsar* the things that are *Cæsars*, it is but right we should also give unto God the things that are Gods by so many just titles. Why now, you cannot without apparent wrong to Christ deny him your selves; you are his, and owe your selves unto him, and all you have, and all that you can do; you are not your own but his. I lay claim unto you in the name of Christ, and challenge your souls and bodies to his use; Dare you deny the claim? or will any step out and question this title? The Lord Jesus hath laid challenges to you. It has been a custom in *England*, on the Coronation day, as multitudes of people were feasting in *Westminster-Hall*, a Herald comes forth, and Champion for the King, and proclaimed his title to the Crown; and if any questioned his title, he was there ready to make it good.

I do now proclaim to you, that Christ is your Lord, and you are his Servants, and challenges your service; if any question his Title, I will justifie it, and make it good, let the case come to tryal, on condition that whoever is convinced

ced ſhall yield ſubjection: Let me ask you then, Did not he make you, and not ye your ſelves, *Pſal.* 95. 6? and does not he preſerve and ſuſtain you? and ye are the Sheep of his paſture, *Verſ.* 7? Did not Chriſt purchaſe you with his own blood, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18? Were you not the deareſt purchaſe, and was not the greateſt price paid for you that ever the world heard of? Well, what ſay you to this Title? Doth not juſtice give every one his own? and are not you Chriſts? If there be any creature in Heaven or Earth, that can lay a better claim, or pretend a juſter Title to you than Chriſt, then let it have your hearts and ſervice; but if the Lord Jeſus have the full and ſole right to you, then do not ſo much wrong him and your own ſouls, as to deny or withſtand this juſt and reaſonable motion.

2. Give up your ſelves to this Lord, or you are unthankful; gratitude as well as juſtice requires this at your hands. Nothing is more abhorrent to an ingenuous ſpirit, than the brand of ingratitude, to be ſo baſe and unworthy as to render evil for good; *ingratum ſi dixeris, omnia dixeris*, call a man unthankful, and you call him all that's naught: abhor it as death, to be guilty or have the name of ingratitude. Well, now, ſuppoſe a man had by ſome capital crime incurred the danger of the Law, and the ſentence of death were paſt upon him; ſhould another ſtep in and humble himſelf, to beg the pardon, or begger himſelf to buy the

freedom for him; Muſt not that man be wholly his, who hath ranſomed him from the Gallows? This is our caſe, Sin was our work, and Death was our wages; we had ſinned, and muſt dye for it; there was no eſcape from deſtruction: but the Lord Jeſus would not ſuffer us to periſh, but debaſed himſelf, came down from Heaven, gave himſelf for us, and ſuffered in our ſtead, that we might live; and made himſelf a Servant for us though no way bound to us. Now judg with your ſelves, I appeal to your own Conſciences, whether this incomparable favour do not lay an unavoidable obligation upon us, to devote our ſelves wholly to him? 2 *Cor.* 5. 14, 15. If after Chriſt hath ſtoopt ſo low, as to become man, and was made under the Law, and being in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, bore our infirmities and ſorrows, lay under the frowns of his Father, and ſubmitted himſelf to the pain, ſhame, ſting and curſe of the death of the Croſs; if after all this we ſhould neglect his Salvation, reject his Soveraignty, Would not the Heavens bluſh at this unheard of ingratitude? and the very bruits riſe up in judgment againſt us and condemn us? *The Ox knows his owner, and the Aſs his Maſters crib: but Iſrael doth not know, my people doth not conſider*, Iſa. 13. Jer. 8. 7, 8.

3. Reſign your ſelves to this bleſſed Lord, for he deſerves you, he is worthy of you; if you were Ten thouſand times better than you are, you can never ſubmit your ſelves to a better

ter Lord, nor ſerve a better Maſter: There is nothing in him that can juſtly diſcourage you, nor reaſonably deter you from his ſervice; fear not evil from the greateſt good, unleſs it be in a way of diſobedience and rebellion. He is not a proud, rigid, imperious or cruel Maſter; he will not deal with you as the treacherous Maſter, the World, which fills your ſouls with nothing but huſks and ſwill, and rewards all your painful ſervices with nothing but diſappointment and miſery; at the beſt, preſents you with a breaſt full of wind and vanity; and at the laſt with wo and vexation, and leaves you helpleſs in your greateſt neceſſities. Nor is he cruel and tyrannical, as Satan, who fills his Servants with terror here, and hereafter rewards them with fire and brimſtone. Nor like the fleſh and ſin, whoſe work is bad, and its wages no better; for the ſervant of ſin, beſides that he hath no fruit nor comfort of his ſervice in the mean time, when he comes to receive his wages at the end of his term, findeth nothing but ſhame or death; ſhame if he leave his ſervice; if he leave it not, death. *Rom.* 6. 21, *What fruit had ye then in thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed? for the end of thoſe things is death.* 'Tis horrible, intollerable ſlavery, to ſerve Sin, Satan and the World; but when you give up your ſelves to the ſervice of Chriſt, you ſhall live to the ſolideſt contentment, and real joy and honour: you cannot poſſibly yield your ſelves to a more excellent and delightful

ſervice; *His yoke is eaſie and his burthen light his ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all his paths are peace*, Prov. 3. 17. His ſervice is freedom, and his work wages; to be Chriſts devoted ſervant, is not only better than liberty, but more to be deſired than ſoveraignty: No other Lord ever bought his Servants ſo dear, or fed them ſo plentifully, or clad them ſo ſumptuouſly, or uſed them ſo gently, or rewarded them ſo bountifully. He will protect and proſper them, yea, takes pleaſure in their proſperity; he will bleſs them with ſpiritual bleſſings, which are the beſt bleſſings, and lead them by his own counſel, yea carry them in his boſome, and afterward receive them to glory.

4. Surrender your ſelves to this great Lord, for he deſires you; yea, that you would be his, as he hath been yours, is all he deſires; you cannot beſtow a better gift upon him than your ſelves; others may give him their goods, their eſtates, *&c.* but he that gives Chriſt himſelf, can give no more, no better. He deſires you, not that he hath any need of you, or to make advantage of you; but that he may reſtore you better to your ſelves than he receives you: He will put his grace into your hearts, repair his image in your minds, and make you wiſe unto ſalvation. *Seneca* tells us, That among other Scholars that gave rich gifts to their Maſter *Socrates*, —*Eſchines* gave himſelf, having nothing elſe to give; His Maſter

ſter anſwered, Upon this condition I take thee, that I may reſtore thee better than I receive thee. On the ſame, and no worſe terms (yea much better) Chriſt accepts of thoſe that tender their ſervice unto him; he that gives not himſelf to the Lord, whatever elſe he gives, in his eſteem is juſt nothing: nothing [*in eſſe gratiæ*] in point of truth, worth, and grace. Firſt you muſt give your ſelves to the Lord, and then your goods to his poor, if you would find acceptance, 2 *Cor.* 8 5, or as the King of *Sodom* ſaid to *Abraham*, *Give me the perſons, the ſouls, and take the goods to thy ſelf.*

5. Take Chriſt for your Lord, and own your ſelves for his Servants, for ſo you are, whether you will or not; your conſent and reſignation is neceſſary to your good, to eaſe you of your cares, and ſecure you from preſent eternal miſery, not for his title and right which is abſolute and unqueſtionable, and he will have you either by love or by force. He requires in the Covenant of Grace, that he have his right by your conſent, and not by conſtraint; that you thankfully accept the motion, and with hearty and full conſent of will reſign your ſelves to him as his own, even as his creatures and his ranſomed ones, by a Covenant never to be violated. But if you will not underſtand and acknowledg this plenary dominion he hath over you, he will not loſe his right, nor lay down his claim to

you: It's the greateſt folly to rebel againſt this Lord, to whom at laſt you muſt be forced to ſubmit. Who would not chuſe him to be their Lord, when (whether they will or no) he will be their Lord? Who would not deſire to be ruled and guided by his Teſtimonies, rather than to be ſuppreſſed and deſtroyed by his Providence? We muſt all either bow the knee, or he will break the back; if we will not bear his yoke, we muſt become his footſtool. Were it not better to take hold of his ſtrength by Faith, than his ſtrength ſhould take hold of us in diſpleaſure and wrath? and to feel the efficacy of his grace, than the power of his anger? The proudeſt Rebel ſhall at laſt cry, Lord, Lord, but it will be too late: At length Chriſt will be too hard for all that riſe up againſt him, and will not that he ſhould reign over them; he that will not come to him as a friend, ſhall be ſlain by him as an enemy, *Luke* 19. 27. every one [*Sub pedibus ejus erit, aut ad obtatus, aut victus*] all muſt one way or other be ſubject to him, either as ſervants or ſlaves; either under his grace, or under his wrath. O do not thou lift up the heel againſt him, to whom thou muſt one day bow the knee; if thou wilt not now kiſs the Son, thou ſhalt ſhortly lick the duſt of his feet; if thou be not now in the number of his willing people, in the day of the power of his grace; in the day

day of his wrath his arrows will be in thy heart as one amongſt his enemies: In a word, if thou wilt not ſtoop to his golden Scepter, thou muſt be broken in pieces with his rod of iron.

6. Give up your ſelves to Chriſt, and you ſhall be your own and be happy; look when and how much you reſign your ſelves to this abſolute Lord, even then, and ſo muuh you are your own and no more; you are never your own, but when and while you are his; what you deny him, or ſteal from him, you give to the Devil, the World and the Fleſh; you lye at the command of every vile luſt, or black devil, till you become his ſubjects: [*O quam multos habet dominos, qui unum non habet!*] O how many, how ignoble, how poor, how cruel are the Lords of that man, who hath not this one Lord!

But the way to ſecure your ſelves, and whatever is dear to you, is to give up all to Chriſt. He that loſeth himſelf and his life, ſhall find it; and he that labours to ſecure himſelf another way, loſeth all, *Matt.* 16. 25. If you be his, you are happy; but if you be your own, you are moſt miſerable. Can you ſupport, preſerve, or provide for your ſelves? who ſhall ſave you in the hour of temptation and diſtreſs? know ye not yet ſo much of your own inſufficiency, and do ye not yet feel your ſelves to be ſuch a daily burthen to your ſelves, that you have enough

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of your selves ere now, as to beg of God above all your enemies, to save you from your selves, and to save you from being forsaken of God, and given up to your selves?

Remember, that none in the world hath sufficient power, wisdom and goodness, to take the full care and charge of you, but Christ; none else can save you, or sanctifie you, or keep you alive one hour; and therefore it will be your happiness and honour, that you are his. He will use you only in safe and honourable services, and to no worse an end than your endless happiness.

Consider a little, how unfit you are to be your own Lords, and how unable to govern your selves; so blind and ignorant, so byassed by a corrupt will, so turbulent are your passions, so unceſſant and powerful is the temptation of your sence and appetite, that 'twere as fit for a man to be govern'd by a servant, or a rider by his horse. But he is most perfectly fit to govern you and all the world; you can desire nothing reasonably in a Lord and Governor which is not in him: He hath perfect wisdom to know what is best; perfect goodness, and therefore will be most regardful of his subjects good, and will put no evil into his Laws; Almighty to protect his Servants, and see to the execution of his Laws: most just, and therefore can do no wrong; but all his Laws and judgments are equal and impartial.

partial. He is our very end, intereſt and felicity, our deareſt friend and father, and therefore loves us better than we love our ſelves: and therefore we have greateſt reaſon to ſubmit to his Lordſhip, and obey him, as one that rules us to our own felicity.

7. Let him be your Lord to rule and ſave you, or you muſt needs periſh everlaſtingly; it's a folly to think Chriſt ſhould ſave you, while you ſerve his enemies: in vain do you expect the dignities and priviledges that come by Chriſt, and not ſubmit to the duties and ſervices that are due to Chriſt. *He is the author of ſalvation to them that obey him*, Heb. 5. 9. The Goſpel is a meſſage of eternal life only to thoſe to whom it is a rule of ſpiritual life; and the true believer does not only caſt himſelf into the arms of Chriſt to be ſaved; but alſo caſts himſelf at Chriſts feet to ſerve him: never man had Chriſt for his Saviour, unleſs he took him for his Lord.

There is no poſſible eſcape for Chriſts enemies. If they had another Lord or Potentate that could match Chriſt in ſtrength, they might fly to him, to defend them from Chriſt; but Chriſt is the only Lord, and woe unto them that have him for their only enemy. *Can thy heart endure, or thy hands be ſtrong in the day when this Lord ſhall deal with thee?* Ezek. 22. 14. Jer. 4. 13. Fooliſh ſinner! doſt thou contend with thy Maker? wilt thou ſet bryars and thorns

againſt

againſt him in battel, as ſmoak contend, with the wind, the wax with the fire, the ſtubble with the flame, or the ſnow-ball with the Sun? 'Tis hard to kick againſt the pricks; there's no flying from him, but by flying to him, *Iſa.* 10. 3. *What will ye do in the day of viſitation, and in the deſolation which ſhall come from far? To whom will ye flee for help? And where will ye leave your glory?* Will you call upon the rocks and mountains to fall on you, and cover you from the wrath of the Lamb? when the great day of his wrath is, who ſhall be able to abide? *Rev.* 6. 15, 16, 17. Were it not better now to enter into the rock, and hide your ſelves in the clefts of this rock? *Iſa.* 2. 10. No way to eſcape the wrath of God, (one ſpark whereof will burn the guilty ſinner to deſtruction) but by kiſſing the Son, *Pſal.* 2. ult.

2. Branch of exhortation, to all them who have given up their names to Chriſt and are his liſted, hired ſervants. Let me perſwade you to obey and ſerve this great and bleſſed Lord, O ſerve him with greateſt diligence and fervency of ſpirit. This beſt Lord muſt have your beſt ſervice: dare not to offer to this Lord that which coſt you nothing; the blind and lame are too bad for your ordinary lords; this Lord muſt have your all; the whole of your created abiliti s. He deſerves and his work requires your all, he hath much more buſineſs then all the time and ſtrength of his ſervants can bring about; if every hair of

your

your heads were an hand, you might have your hands full of work. O let none do his work negligently; how great was his goodnes, to take such unprofitable servants as we are, into the family of his Church! what saw he in us more than in Heathens, that he should put such an honour upon us.

I shall first instruct, and then excite you.

1. For your direction, I shall lay down, 1. Rules. 2. Meanes. 3. Manner of this service.

1. Rules about Christs service.

1. Live and act wholly to and for this your Lord, do all you do for Christ, *Phil* 1. 21. *For to me to live is Christ.* Christ is the scope and end of all his life, *Rom.* 14. 6, 7, 8. *None of us liveth to himself, and no man dyeth to himself. For whether we live, we live to the Lord: and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we regard a day or not, it must be to the Lord.* Whether we eat or not, it must be to the Lord; make him the end of your conversation, *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever,* Heb 13. 7, 8.

2. In all things seek to please him, 1 *Cor* 7. 32. *Care for the things that belong to the Lord, how you may please the Lord. And labour whether present or absent, to be accepted of him,* 2 Cor. 5. 9. Have none to please but Christ, and for Christ.

3. Be ever found doing his work, *Mat.* 24. 46, *Bleſſed is that ſervant, whom his Lord when he cometh ſhall find ſo doing:* never ceaſe working till you die; life and labour muſt end together; he gives us no time to be idle in.

4. Go by his rule in all your ways: let all your actions and proceedings be regulated by his law; *whatſoever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jeſus,* Col. 3. 17. As when *Pharaoh* had lifted up *Joſeph* and made him ruler over the Land of *Egypt, and they cryed before him, bow the knee:* Pharaoh *ſaid unto* Joſeph, *I am* Pharaoh, *and without thee ſhall no man lift up his hand or foot in all* Egypt, *Gen.* 41. 44. So,

5. Employ all you are, have, and can, for him. His word is (*Luke* 19. 13.) *Occupy till I come,* all your Talents; he requires the ſervice of thoughts, 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. of words, *Eph.* 4. 29. of works, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. of body and Spirit, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 23.

6. Highly eſteem what ever is his, His Day, Ordinances, Servants, Miniſters, and his holy Word; let the feet of his Embaſſadors be beautiful, both for their Maſter and their meſſage-ſake; they are the Servants of Chriſt. Our delight ſhould be in thoſe excellent ones who bear the image, and wear the badge of our Lord; the world now thinks that of all callings, this of the Miniſtry can beſt be ſpared: but let us not think ſo baſely of them who are Chriſts ſervants, not only to do his buſineſs, but

to

to wait on his perſon, ye to repreſent his perſon, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1.

7. Study to approve your ſelves in all things to him, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 11, 12. Pray always that God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleaſure of his goodneſs, and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. In a word, let none but Chriſt be your end. Serve him not to ſerve your own turns, but let every intereſt be ſubſervient to Chriſt; learn to periſh, that the glory of Chriſt may live; make not Religion a deſign; let Chriſt be ſweet for himſelf; in ſerving him, let nothing elſe be your ſcope, and then nothing will divert you; aim not at profit, ſo gain will not allure you; nor at pleaſure, ſo eaſe will not corrupt you; nor at friends, ſo favour will not ſeduce you. Be all unto Chriſt, and let Chriſt be all unto you. Be all or nothing.

2. Means.

1. Redemption from other oppoſite Maſters, *Luk.* 1. 74. *That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might ſerve him without fear in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him all the days of our life.*

2. Enmity in us muſt be ſubdued; all that *exalts it ſelf againſt the knowledg of God, ſtrong holds pull'd down, imaginations and high things*

caſt

caſt down, and every thought be brought into captivity to the obedience of Chriſt, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

3. Receive inſtruction from him; we muſt be taught in this ſervice, and that by him we muſt learn Chriſt, *Epheſ.* 4. 20, 21. *If ſo be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jeſus.* Col. 3. 16. *Let the word of Chriſt dwell in you richly, in all wiſdom.* Phil. 4. 12, *In all things I am inſtructed*

4. You muſt alſo be furniſhed by him with graces and ſtrength, 2 *Tim.* 3. 17, *Throughly furniſhed to all good works.* And 2 *Tim.* 2. 21, *Prepared unto every good work*; and have his ſtrength, or you can do nothing, *Joh.* 15. 5.

5. Practiſe ſelf-denial; *If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf and take up his croſs and follow me*, Mat. 16 24. Either you muſt deny your ſelf, or you will deny Chriſt; that man that ſets much by himſelf, will never reckon much of a Saviour. He who hath not learned ſelf denial, when Chriſt and ſelf come in competition, meet on a narrow bridge, will endeavour to make Chriſt go back; he that doth not account himſelf nothing, will ſoon eſteem Chriſt ſo.

6. Clear your ſelves from all worldly diſtractions; lay aſide the world as much as may be that you may attend upon the Lord without diſtraction, 1 *Cor.* 7. 35. Let not this be your rule to Chriſt and holineſs, ſo far as you may

may without any prejudice to your worldly intereſts; but this, follow the world ſo far only as you may without being falſe and unfaithful to Chriſt and his ſervice; do not ſay to duty, as Prayer, Hearing, Meditation, ſtand aſide, I have ſuch a worldly buſineſs to look after; but rather ſay world ſtand aſide. Be ſure that you are gotten clear of the world, and that Chriſt have the preheminence in you; be not ye the worlds priſoners, but Chriſts free men.

7. Remember the laſt account and judgment, 2 *Cor.* 5. 9, 10. *Wherefore we labour that whether preſent or abſent, we may be accepted of him, for we muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* None ſo diligent and faithful in the ſervice of this Lord, as thoſe that with *Jerome* have ſtill ſounding in their ears that terrible voice, *Surgite mortui & venite ad judicium:* Our Lord is gone, but will come again to take an account how matters have been managed during his abſence; now ſincce we look for ſuch things, what manner of perſons ought we to be?

3. For manner; Chriſt be ſerved in a right manner.

1. Heartily, freely, cheerfully; the heart is the marrow of the performance, *Col.* 3. 23.

Whatſoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, Epheſ. 6. 6. (ὀφθαλμοδουλείαν,) *not with eye ſervice as men pleaſers, but as the ſervants of Chriſt, doing the will of God from the heart:* Serve him in the ſpirit, doing ſervice with good-will and gladneſs, making it our meat and drink to do his will, *quod cor non facit, non ſit.*

2. Humbly, reverently; when we have done all we can, all thoſe things that are commanded, *ſay we are unprofitable ſervants, we have done that which was our duty to do,* Luk. 17. 9, 10. In bearing when he corrects, content with our allowance, not doing what we pleaſe, but what pleaſes him; coming at every call, and obeying every command, and doing it becauſe commanded; eying the precept in every performance; praying, hearing, giving, becauſe Chriſt bids me.

And with greateſt reverence; ſerving with reverence and godly fear, *Heb.* 12. 18. remembring our diſtance. *Auguſtus* ſaid to one that gave him homely entertainment, *Who made you and I ſo familiar?*

3. Solely. *No man can ſerve two maſters, Luk.* 16. 13. Not ſerve them ſo as to pleaſe both, ſcarce ſo as to pleaſe either; not ſerve ſin or Satan at all, nor man in oppoſition to, or competition with Chriſt, who keeps ſervants to ſerve others. We muſt be undivided, ſerve him and none but him, forſake all and follow him.

4. Faith-

4. Faithfully, ſincerely; as *Moſes* who was faithful in all his houſe, as a ſervant, *Heb.*7.5. *Now therefore fear the Lord, and ſerve him in ſincerity and truth*, Joſh. 24. 14. *q. d.* If you intend to ſerve him, it muſt be done in uprightneſs, or elſe you do not ſerve him at all. God abhors a Hypocrite more than a Sodomite.

5. Fervently, zealouſly, diligently; *fervent in ſpirit* (muſt be joined) *with ſerving the Lord*, *Rom.* 12. 11. Do all we do with all our might; the living God muſt have lively ſervice. How diligent was *Abrahams* Servant in his Maſters work? he would not eat bread till he had done his errand; and when 'twas done, he ſtay'd not on compliments. The Twelve Tribes ſerved God inſtantly day and night, *Act.* 26. 7. Diligence is the property of a good ſervant.

6. Entirely, abſolutely, univerſally.

1. In reſpect of the ſubject, with all the faculties of the ſoul, and members of the body, *Rom.* 6. 19. with all our abilities.

2. In regard of the Object, though never ſo irrational to fleſh and blood; this is reaſon enough, the unerring Lord will have it ſo; not pick out our work, never examine what the ſervice commanded is, but who commands it, with blind obedience.

3. In all places, in private as well as in publick; for he hath, yea, fills all places; if thou canſt find out a place where he doth not ſee thee, there it ſhall be lawful for thee t[illegible]erve

others; we must have respect to all his commands.

7. Constantly and perpetually; in time of prosperity as well as adversity; and *e contra*; he is ever the same, and so should his servants and service be; we can neither begin too soon, nor continue too long in Christs service; none ever repented of either; there must be no end of working till of living. Faithfulness unto death hath the only promise of a Crown of life, *Rev.* 2.10. everlasting, *Rom.* 14.9. This service takes in the whole man and life.

2. For Motives and Encouragements, besides what was in the Characters and Properties of the Master, consider but what a service this is, and that will be motive enough to embrace and lay hold on it.

1. It is a most honourable service, whether we respect the Master or the work; 'tis more honour to serve Christ than to serve Emperours, nay to have Emperours serve us; he is the better man that serves the better Master. Now he is the best Master; 'tis usual with the Apostles to prefix this among other their Honourary titles: *Paul a servant of Christ*, This was one of the fairest flowers in their Garland; the meanest offices about Princes are accounted honourable. *Servire Deo regnare est*, 'tis Royal and Kingly; a glorious Master, and glorious fellow-servants, Angels, and glorified Saints; all the ser[illegible] honourable, the practice of all vertues,

tues, praying and praiſing, *&c. Honorabilia legis*, Hoſ. 8. 12. If ever it be put to your choice either to have the greateſt outward favours, or ſerve Chriſt with diſgrace, chuſe the latter with *Moſes*, Heb. 11. 24,25. *He refuſed to be called the ſon of Pharoahs daughter, chuſing rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon.* Reproach and indignities for Chriſt are favours; chains and priſons for Chriſt is a mark of honour and rich treaſure.

2. Moſt comfortable; a ſervice full of ſoul-raviſhing joy; *A day in his Courts is better than a thouſand elſewhere*, Pſal. 84 10. 'Tis a type of heaven, where is fulneſs of joy; it leads to communion with God, who is the God of all conſolation: O when Saints meet with God in duty, they are in a corner of Heaven!

3. A moſt profitable ſervice: we are indeed unprofitable ſervants, but ſure we have a very profitable ſervice under him; they that ſpeak againſt the Lord with ſtout words, ſaying, *Mal.* 3. 13, 14. *It is in vain to ſerve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances?* And *Job* 21. 15. *What is the Almighty that we ſhould ſerve him, and what profit ſhall we have, if we pray unto him?* ſpeak without all truth and reaſon, for never any truly ſerved the Lord who gained not evidently by it: your *labour is not in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. *ult.* No man ever kindled a fire on his Altar for nought. The ſervants

vants of Christ may be poor here, but this is the working time, and in their sufferings they serve him, 1 *Tim.* 6.6. 'tis great gain.

4. 'Tis a necessary service, and indispensable: we are not left to our own liberty to chuse whether we will serve him or no, this is the *unum necessarium*, and must be done.

1. Though the thing to be done be dangerous, *Phil.* 2. 30. *Not regarding his own life.*

2. Though it be difficult to us.

3. Though unlikely to take effect, *Luke* 5 5. *We have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net*; though men forbid and withstand us, and would beat us off from it, *Acts* 5. 29. *We must obey God rather than Man.*

5. Most easy, *Mat.* 11. 29, 30. None other so easy.

1. In regard of the nature of this service, His Commandments are not grievious, *Joh.* 5. 3. There is certainty in this employment; 'tis easy to the new nature, (as the light of the Sun is delightful to those that have good eyes) to them that love God and have the right art of serving him.

2. In regard of other services; That under the Covenant of Works, and that under Sin and Satan.

3. 'Tis easie in regard of the help afforded to it: 'Tis easie for a Child to lift up a great weight, when a Giant holds his hand

and

and lifts with him: Chriſt and his Spirit aſſiſt. It were not only hard, but impoſſible if left to our ſelves in it: but, *da domine quod jubes, & jube quod vis: I can do all things through Chriſt which ſtrengthens me.* 'Tis eaſie to act what Chriſt in the Covenant of Grace will accept, and in reſpect of the reward; and compared with the ſervice of Satan and Sin, that afford no gawdy-days.

6. 'Tis the greateſt freedom; it not only conſiſts with, but brings freedom: 'tis the Law of liberty, *Jam.* 1. 25. *He is the Lords freeman,* 1 Cor. 7. 22. *John* 8. 32, It is perfect freedom, and will free us from all other ſervices; *tot domini, quot vitia,* every luſt calls for his attendance, and many times contrary luſts at once (as when Pride bids let flye, Covetouſneſs cryes hold); whereby the poor man is infinitely diſtracted between a lothneſs to deny either, and the impoſſibility of gratifying both.

7. 'Tis a happy ſervice if well done: fullneſs and eternity of happineſs is the reward of it. *Matt.* 24. 46, *Bleſſed is that ſervant whom his Lord finds ſo doing.* 1 Tim. 4. 8, *'Tis profitable unto all things, having the promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* John 12. 26, *If any man ſerve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there ſhall my ſervant be: if any man ſerve me, him will my father honour.*

That

That *Euge* in the end, *Well done thou good and faithful ſervant, thou haſt been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of the Lord*, will infinitely chear and revive the heart of Gods painful and faithful Servant.

Improve this for your comfort in all your diſtreſſes, and comfort your ſelves with theſe words.

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